THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

The Test of Congress 225
Week by Week 226
The Reichstag Fire 229
Toward Rome? ..... George N. Shuster 231
The Gospel of "Success" ..... John Moody 233
Prayer of a Social Worker (*verse*) ..... Dorothy C. McGrath 234
Can Law Stop Lynching? ..... John T. Gillard 235
Aries (*verse*) ..... Elizabeth Coatsworth 237
Naturalizing Aliens ..... Harold Fields 238
Victory in the Corn Belt ..... Charles Morrow Wilson 240
Large Catholic Families .. Robert J. O'Connor 242
Communications 243
The Play and Screen .... Richard Dana Skinner 246
Books ..... Ross J. S. Hoffman, Frank Wollencott Barnes, Frank C. Hanighen, John A. Ryan 247

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THE TEST OF CONGRESS

THE COMING session of Congress casts queer shadows before it. The political and journalistic oracles are trying to read the signs and omens, and are uttering forecasts which they probably hope will not be remembered by their readers if their prophecies or guesses go too wildly wrong. There is a fairly general agreement that the President is still very much the master of the situation, and that the great revolt against his policies which so many of his critics were predicting during the first hectic days of the gold purchase experiment, and doing their best to bring about, has fizzled out almost completely. This was bound to happen, so far as this particular issue was concerned, simply because the lack of anything like agreement among the experts and leaders of the "sound money" forces became so noticeable as the debate proceeded as to destroy the effect of their opposition to the President. Walter Lippmann, for example, analyzed an article in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs,* written "by the leading financial adviser to the government which is today the leading defender of the gold standard": Charles Rist, the chief financial expert of the French delegation to the World Economic Conference, in which the point of view taught by Professor Warren, upon which President Roosevelt has been acting, is substantially upheld. A thousand poor jokes about Professor Warren's high rating as a judge of poultry are silenced—or should be silenced—by this French expert. He is of the most rigid orthodoxy in his belief in the gold standard, and the necessity of reestablishing it; but he recognized, as so few of our own "sound money" advocates have done—at least publicly—that there were adequate reasons why the post-war gold standard broke down, and, it seems, his account of the breakdown, and his recommendations for overcoming it, are substantially identical with Professor Warren's views. This is only one, though a very remarkable, instance of the lack of agreement among the experts; a great many others have occurred, so that there is little prospect that the main attack upon the President's leadership, when Congress reassembles, will be delivered at his financial plan.

But of course there will be a fierce attack, probably at many points. That acute observer of the

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Washington drama, Arthur Krock, of the New York *Times,* thinks that Congress will have to struggle with efforts to place a legal foundation under a powerful movement to regulate profits and fix prices in order to "eliminate the deep valleys of boom years and the great peaks of prosperity," and also to amend the R.F.C. Act to permit direct government loans to industry. That both these ideas—and many others of a similar type—are likely to be advanced when Congress meets, is taken for granted not only by the more conservative type of observer, but by many others as well. Such ultra-conservative commentators as Mark Sullivan are full of fears that these signs of the times indicate that the country is headed straight for "the socialized state." The first American Fascist journal, the *Awakener,* has appeared, demanding that President Roosevelt throw all his socialistic college professors off the Ship of State at once. Otherwise, according to the *Awakener,* there will be a "dictatorship of the right." Politicians and college professors supporting the new, socialistic movements are to be swept aside, anyhow, if the President does not do the job himself. Whether concentration camps after the German Nazi model are to be set up by the "Awakeners," the first number of their lively journal does not tell us. Almost simultaneously with its publication there also comes the first number of a new anti-Fascist journal succinctly entitled *Fight!* published by the American League against War and Fascism. And by Fascism this new journal does not exclusively mean the Italian and German varieties; it is alive to the symptoms now appearing of the American type.

Of course, neither the *Awakener* or *Fight!* is of any great importance. These organs, and others like them as yet do not represent really formidable movements. But as symbols of the deeper meanings of the present situation in this country, they are of high significance. They indicate the social forces which will be represented, or which will seek representation, in the coming session of Congress. The great questions that will be debated at Washington next month will not be confined to particular points of the President's policy —they will deal with the meaning of that policy, and the meaning of all the problems now facing us. Is that meaning a revolutionary one? Or is what we are undergoing only another more prolonged and drastic experience of the traditional "business cycle"? It will be the test of Congress to determine the true answer to this question.

We are of the belief that if Congress, and the forces which influence Congress, should accept the view that what we now are experiencing is but a temporary and already disappearing dislocation of our social system, then the disaster that will follow such a mistaken view will be worse than anything we have yet witnessed. We think that the word "revolutionary" has alarmed many people needlessly. The connotations of physical violence carried by such a word are so appalling that they cause many minds to shut themselves up against any serious consideration of the facts of our present situation. Such minds refuse to recognize the signs and omens of a great turning point in human history, which has already been at work in other countries, and which is now appearing in our own. Precisely what form this vast movement will assume among ourselves, nobody can surely tell; few guesses are likely to be very near the truth as the future will reveal it; but a great change is at work, and it will not be checked by denying its reality. Nor can we return to things as they were before March, 1932. We think that Congress will recognize this truth; and our hope is that the courageous and constructive leadership of the administration will be accepted by Congress so that the nation may continue what is now well begun: a definite advance toward a system based on social justice.

WEEK BY WEEK

Time and Tide

WHETHER it be the Christmas spirit or something else, sentiment has visibly improved during the past week. The major government policies are of course still under fire and it is well they should be. An American President whom half the people did not consider wrong would be so anomalous as to make one fear for the safety and permanence of the nation. Among recent apparitions is the star deserved by General W. W. Atterbury, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, whose address of confidence is noteworthy because its author is one of those business men whose records have survived the test of four bad years. When such a one declares, in spite of party affiliations, that he is "an enthusiastic believer in the patriotism, the courage and the resourcefulness of Franklin D. Roosevelt," the opinion may be said to come from the front-line trenches. And when he goes on to declare that "business is improving," he is merely summing up what the figures seem to indicate. At last one is able to feel that optimism is not entirely hooey. This does not, of course, mean that the roses are coming into perennial bloom, or that Cassandra ought immediately to be sent back to the minors. The things remaining to be accomplished are far greater and more vital than those already done. Above all it needs to be remembered that every error made—errors which the historian of the future alone can discern—will inevitably have to be rectified at considerable expense.

THE EXTENT, for example, to which the wealth of the United States has been written off

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is bound to abide as a central fact in our economic and social development. During recent days new indices to the extent of the problem have been supplied in the form of commissions to supervise defunct securities. Foremost among these is the Foreign Bondholders' Protective Council, which will concern itself within the neighborhood of $4,000,000,000 that, to all intents and purposes, have started for the bottom of the sea. Whether the Council's diving suits are adequate to the situation remains to be seen. What is evident and what cannot be stressed too frequently is the social effect of the losses which have been sustained or which are yet to appear. No government can press back into the hands of millions of investors the wealth which they once confidently loaned out, and upon the conservation of which they relied for what is virtually old-age and sickness insurance. As a nation we shall have to realize henceforth the existence of an immense middle-class proletariat, and beyond that the absence of precisely those economic forces which made a great deal of the activity in the arts or other "higher" forms of existence possible. All our lives are bound to be different as a result of what has happened to those who, perhaps more than any other class, are the victims of disaster.

Red Rioters

FIVE THOUSAND members of the United Ukrainian Organizations of Chicago, parading on December 17 in public protest against Soviet Russia's treatment of Ukraine, became the target of a Communist demonstration even larger and more disgraceful than the one staged a few weeks ago against the Ukrainian mass meeting in New York. The Relief Committee for Starving Ukraine makes the charge that "mass starvation," which has sentenced millions to death in Ukraine, "was brought about by the Soviet government purposely in retaliation for the Ukrainian attitude in resisting the forceful introduction of the Communistic experiment in the land." Whether this accusation is justified in fact or not, it is certainly not unbelievable, in view of the policies the Soviets are known to have adopted from time to time toward the disaffected; nor is it novel. Many intelligent and reputable travelers and students have said the same thing, on the basis of their own independent observations in Ukraine. Above all, and this is what interests us as Americans, the accusation is in no sense whatever in the class of things which are outlawed or forbidden. It is the type of peaceful protest expressly permitted under our Constitution.

EQUALLY, of course, the Constitution permits peaceful counter-protest. If the Communists regard the Ukrainian charge as false, they may say so with just as much publicity. But the thugs who snarled and shouted and swung fists and threw bricks, to the horrified incredulity of the onlookers (this is written by one of the latter), while the Ukrainian societies marched up Lexington Avenue here, were obviously not thinking of constitutional rights, their own or anyone else's. They were intent on making trouble and getting away, as we say, with murder. That the sandbags and lead pipes with which investigation afterward showed them to be plentifully supplied, hurt only half a dozen was not their fault, but must be ascribed to the efficacious interference of the New York police —whom they doubtless refer to as the "white" or "Fascist" police. In Chicago, they appear to have had better luck. Blackjacks, fists, rifle butts and brass knuckles accounted for injuries to about a hundred persons. These trouble-makers are not nice people to deal with—one glimpse of them in action is enough to show that. Whether they are professional agitators suborned by the Communist International, as many believe, or whether they are merely individual fanatics exhibiting a particularly ugly form of decivilization, they present a problem. We feel a repugnance, in common with all our liberal colleagues, against any avoidable form of suppression. Time and again we have spoken for the rights of these very radicals in the face of police tyranny. But if their illegal and intolerable tactics continue, all liberals may be forced to unite to effect their suppression, to save liberalism itself.

Public Entertainment

WHAT sounds like music to our ears is a recent statement by Harry L. Hopkins, head of the vast Federal Emergency Relief Administration, which is credited with having given 4,000,000 men jobs on civil works projects. The statement was made to a staff correspondent of the New York *Evening Post* and in part is as follows: "The problem in this country from now on is going to be less how to earn a living and more how to spend leisure time. Now is the time to start meeting this problem. We must start looking to the future. We must start providing for the free time. I should like to see our park systems really used. They should be of real service to the people. There should be orchestras playing out under the trees where people live. These things are going to be developed under public rather than private auspices." Following this statement of policy he told of beginnings already made for civic orchestras and for a system of civic repertory theatres. We are already familiar with the weekly concerts being given in the auditorium of the Museum of Natural History in New York where the trees, in view of the weather, are synthetic. They are first class, they are free and they are well and enthusiastically attended. The musicians are unemployed men of real competence musically who, without this employment, would be

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dependent on the public purse through charity, and idle, contributing nothing from their talent, submerged. The usual aridity of our public squares and other places for the leisure enjoyment of the populace should be made to blossom with a little decent life. As Secretary Perkins has said, "It is time we treated ourselves to a little civilization." One of the objections to the plan is that it discriminates in favor of the urban population. However, with the rise in farm income indicated elsewhere in this issue and the improvement of the automotive facilities for the modern farmer to go to town, he and the family should find something to enjoy when they get there.

Good or Cheap?

DRINKING raises a good many problems, though anybody acquainted with the days of yore might not immediately think so in the presence of gin bottles on A. and P. counters, choice wines in department stores, and cocktails sliding across the counters of innumerable Greasy Spoons. There are first of all the moral implications, which no laws taken by themselves will ever deal with satisfactorily and completely. We need a new and sane temperance movement, conducted in accord with Catholic principles. And beyond that we require fair treatment of the purchaser, who must not be overcharged if the bootlegger is to die out and who must be assured of getting what he asks for. One may accordingly welcome the investigations, conducted in New York and elsewhere, into the contents and characteristics of diverse brands of spirits on sale. So far we have not noticed that anything hostile to the meaning of the Pure Food Laws has been unearthed. But there has been much juggling with names, ages and merits. The liquor traffic is a hazardous one at best; and one essential step toward keeping it amenable to the general welfare is to ensure, by whatever means necessary, the same honest treatment which the citizen of Britain, for instance, gets almost without thinking about it.

The Lindberghs Are Home

IT IS not too much to say that the whole country takes a personal delight in welcoming its most famous flyers home again. Many comments, our own included, have been made during the course of the 30,000-mile survey which the Lindberghs have now completed. Justice has been done, time and again, to the accurate technical knowledge, the flawlessly sure aërial instinct, which governed every stage of this flight, giving almost the appearance of unfailing luck to what was a brilliantly sustained achievement. Now it is all over—the nosing about over the ice-floes of the northern Atlantic, the great leap over the southern Atlantic, the flight across pathless Amazonian jungle: all those arrow-like trajectories over fabulous distances, brought off without a break in form or a moment's uncomfortable hazard. The social aspect of this trip was also especially satisfactory. Not only did Colonel Lindbergh fly to the home of his father in Sweden, and not only did Mrs. Lindbergh visit her sister in Wales. There was likewise a most happy balance in the greetings that met them everywhere. The Colonel is still adored as the hero of the world; but the crowds generally have now learned not to tear him to pieces, which removes the sole disadvantage that fame has brought to this super-extraordinary young man. Now he and his wife, who perfectly matches him in modesty and pluck, and who is rapidly becoming an expert at radio and piloting, top it by arriving home in time to have Christmas with their baby son: a human, a domestic, and above all an American sort of way to wind up a wonderful performance.

A Bas the Cold!

CONSIDERED in its own right merely, and not as the handmaid of more serious ills, the common cold has caused perhaps as much inconvenience and wretchedness as any other single thing on earth. Concentrated and distilled, the collective misery the sons and daughters of men have endured from coryza wandering through the trachea, the pharynx, the larynx and the antrum, would make an excellent working equivalent for either battle or murder or sudden death. Hence, any prospect that this malady may be collared and thrown has always been important news, by the sound dog-and-man rule. There were the anti-cold serums, featured under headlines of respectful size. There were cold showers and onions and the exclusive orange diet. There were the cod liver vitamines, and just lately there have been serious news stories about carrotene, which resides, as one might imagine, in the carrot, and radiates thence anti-catarrhal influences far and wide. And now there is the airplane. A Chicago physician has been investigating what he had previously believed to be "the folk-tales of the airplane business" regarding the beneficial effect of high altitudes upon congested membranes, and he concludes that medical science has a real basis of fact to go on. He checked carefully not only the experiences of the regular passenger plane employees, who have repeatedly claimed to have lost their colds when going aloft, but also those of about fifty passengers, all of whom jettisoned their sniffles somewhere between Chicago and Newark. His present belief is that the cold germ, "as yet incompletely identified," cannot live in the upper air. In spite of the ominous familiarity of the words in quotation marks, the heart gives a leap of hope. Is it possible that science may be able to adapt this fact—if fact it is—for the benefit of the

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large number of us who cannot rise more than a few feet above the ground?

Art Notes

LAST week we permitted ourselves the dubious thing of grumbling at grumbling. That is, we criticized the general spleen and dullness of the current show of art from sixteen cities of the United States at the Museum of Modern Art in New York. We regretted that there was not displayed there more beauty, more lightness of spirit, more that one conceivably could enjoy looking at. We criticized the predominant critical attitude of the art. Certainly this is not an isolated phenomenon. The shows at the Whitney Museum are predominantly violent and reveal some queer instinct to make ugly subjects uglier by distortion. That any sober art patron should disfigure the calm of his home by hanging such art on his living-room wall is hardly to be thought of. The result is American art languishes in the hands of a few esoteric gallery groups and a few professional critics who have to show some semblance of interest in what is going on in order to fill up the space available for them. Recently we found one small bright spot of exception; the fourth annual exhibition of Americans at the Marie Harriman Gallery. Here were some brilliant satirical genre water color paintings by Frank di Gioia, quite original scenes of Italo-American life that were somehow reminiscent of some of the Dutchmen, of Breugel and Teniers. They were full of the bustle, lusty naturalness and comic spirit of simple people, and if the humor was broadened a little, it was done sympathetically, humanly, rather than acridly.

THE ARTIST'S buffoonery was touched with pity and, one may suspect, with affection for his subjects. The oil paintings that occupy the principal gallery have, with the exception of one Danteesque war scene, the same note of lightness, without being caricatures. There is a landscape by George Picken that has a simple, authentic charm and enjoyableness; two interestingly fanciful canvases by H. D. Rothschild; a quizzical, amusingly colored portrait of a girl by Anna Wilenski; and a graceful and reposeful, though not fully realized, sleeping nude by Florence Ballin Cramer. Fuller Potter, jr., has a large panel of "Madonna and Child" with a border of dimly executed small scenes from the life of Christ, which is modern and naturalistic, but, to us, seemed not altogether successful. His "Boy from Haiti" is better done. On the whole, the show has the quality of pleasantness so lacking in the average modern art show. After all, why expect art patrons to patronize unpleasantness in paint? That is expecting a sort of masochism which happily the average, and the better sort of unaverage, person would not be inclined to indulge. Obviously this does not imply that subjects of deep pity and high tragedy are not legitimate subjects of art; as a matter of fact, even these are as a rule functional pictures and not the sort of things patrons buy for their homes or private galleries unless they have the special values of the works of old masters. To a large degree secular art has been associated with a cult of immorality and shows the usual signs of senile degeneration, isolated, repulsive and pitiful.

THE REICHSTAG FIRE

THE FRENCH REVOLUTION began with an attack on the Bastille; the German Revolution of 1933 (if, indeed, the term is appropriate) started with the burning of the Reichstag. When this historic building was first erected, the tower was dwarfed in order—so it is said—to prevent the people's building from lording it over the emperor's castle. Thus dangerous was democracy in those seemingly feudal days! Now, as a result of the flames kindled on an historic March night, there is no one in Germany who thinks that a representative of the "people" is more than a yes-man entitled to free rides on the train. But the fire itself has grown to huge proportions. It has created the greatest mystery story yet to have come from Fascism, so extraordinarily skilful in the invention of plots, cabals, disappearances and mere surprises.

During many weeks the highest German courts discussed the problem, while staffs of attorneys sought to prove that five major suspects had done the deed. Caravans of journalists moved from Berlin to Leipzig and back again, while the public waited in hushed silence for sundry dramatic moments. It was almost always a good show, even if climaxes—e.g., General Goering's fiery speeches—were far less numerous than the fans wished. Yet from beginning to end the problem remained unsolved. Cock Robin had been slain, but the guilty person could not be found. There was no evidence to show that German Communists had planned a great terrorist campaign, of which this was the opening move. Nor was much evidence concerning anything else accumulated.

The spectacle is so interesting because it shows once again the modern state at a ritualistic function. No one can understand what is happening in Europe today unless he is prepared to think out carefully what such functions mean. There is, for example, the cult of Lenin, developed in Moscow with all the primitive dogmatism of which the Russians are capable. A recent writer on Sovietism narrates an incident very much to the point here. In a certain village propaganda for atheism was having its innings. The crisis was reached when an incubator was displayed in the process of hatching out new chicks. Witnessing so strange a sight,

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one woman could no longer restrain herself. Of course there was no God! If a machine could produce little Rhode Island Reds, why then the assumptions of theology were null and void. Only the dictates of science, which the new government had codified in its own testament, could any longer satisfy. The cult of Lenin is the making concrete —in a sense, the making liturgical—of a religious belief the elements of which are science, progress, work, reason.

Fascism is the substitute which more advanced peoples create for a Sovietistic religion too elementary for the inheritors of Western civilization. Germans, Italians and Frenchmen know too much about science and progress to make a cult of it thinkable among them. Where machines have roared and clicked for a hundred years, dotting romantic valleys with smoke-stacks and back-streets with unemployed men, there is little scope for a preacher of what passes in Russia for good doctrine. Fascism finds in this fact its greatest opportunity. It does not deny the importance of industry, technical skill and work. But it acts as if everything which can be labeled "economic production" could be relegated to a position of secondary importance, and as if vital human realities could again become objects of devotion. These realities are summarized in a special way that is the great secret of Fascism.

This secret amounts in essence to a cult of the dead, which cult can be diagnosed as having several parts. First comes the idea of tradition, as expounded by l'Action Française in France, by Fascism in Italy, and by Hitlerism in Germany. Maurras and his associates proposed for esteem the monarchy as the site, so to speak, of reason, round which Barrès and others placed the somber but sumptuous mantle of the *culte des morts*. Italy revived the memory of Rome's empire, understood less as the basis for irredentistic exploits (though it was also so visualized) than as that which the citizen could reverence in order to endow the collective actuality of the twentieth century with radiance. And behind the display of oratory which Hitler and his followers have used, the idea of the "Reich"—of that which began to have a history under Charlemagne and may enter into possession of another tomorrow—has stood as the chief source of appeal.

Contemporary nationalism is simply one way in which this cult of the dead finds expression. Whereas the eighteenth century saw the nation in the abstract, as it were, and as the form through which an idea was conveyed to the world, our time visualizes "peoples" as verities almost separate from ideas of any kind. They are biological and above all historical entities. Biology is that which confers upon the nation its "race," which is the sum-total of the qualifications with which a nation enters upon the tasks it has to perform. History is the "space" in which, as Mueller van der Bruck says, human action is alone possible. For these reasons, singularly enough, Fascism is at once a threat of war and a retreat from the use of war. In the strict sense, the biological and historical preoccupations tend to lessen imperialistic ambitions, since the effect of these would be to add to the nation elements not compatible with it. And yet both also tend to bring the soldier into prominence, he being the favored "type" of race and action.

Out of these meditations come the ritualistic functions of the modern Fascist state. Granted the emotionalism of the German people and the love of theatre characteristic of the Italians, it is only natural that both should favor us with exceedingly interesting spectacles. Of these the Reichstag fire and the trial which followed are one example. We say one because deed and investigation belong together. The Nazis made of the fact that the building to which they were themselves hostile had been set on fire a great symbol of the subversive forces against which they held themselves elected to fight. Even if a handful of Communists had burned down the structure, no great importance could have been attached to the deed itself. But in the hands of Goebbels and others it became a symbol —even a kind of profane and awful sacrifice. Some of those at the top may only have been toying with the thing, making believe that it was what they wanted it to be. For the great masses, however, the event was tremendously real.

The quest for the guilty may again have been in part a measure designed to cover up certain important tracks. Yet the great mass of the faithful believed in the trial, saw in it a kind of pantomimic representation of that hunt for Marxists to which they themselves were dedicated as believers are to a religion. They do not pursue the Communist because he has wrong ideas, or because he does wicked things. They hound and ferret him out because he is not of the caste. Under other cultural conditions a trial ending as this one did, with poor idiotic Van der Lubbe bearing the responsibility for an action in which others were mysteriously involved, would have seemed either a farce or a starter for further revelations. But in Germany the faithful are completely satisfied. They have witnessed a great scene. They have assisted at a cult. That which they have decided to worship collectively has been worshiped.

In the presence of such phenomena one does well not to judge too hastily or too superficially. It does not suffice to say that nationalism is being reborn in Europe. Or that under the pressure of economic conditions new forms of industrial control are being worked out. The fact of the matter is that new religious forces, old as paganism and yet unthinkable without Christian and modern culture, are working themselves out in ways still past understanding.

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TOWARD ROME?

By GEORGE N. SHUSTER

THE GREATEST event of these days and months in Germany is not the establishment of the Hitler régime but the struggle—perhaps the death-struggle—inside the Lutheran church. For while conversions to political ideas or forms may be impressive and even important, it is the religious belief of the citizen which ultimately determines the character of those ideas and forms. Dictatorships, for example, have been frequent in the past, but hardly one has left the question of spiritual attitudes severely alone. Certainly Napoleon. Mussolini and Lenin did not; and in a country like Germany it was hardly to be expected that the Hitler government could avoid a debate with the confessions. The Chancellor declared, to be sure, that he personally had no desire to change his religious allegiance, and that his government would avoid every species of interference with the churches. This statement of policy was accepted in good faith by both Catholics and Protestants, although many were sceptical because of opinions sponsored by this or that group inside the National-Socialist party.

Nevertheless the German government had committed itself to a philosophy of race which seemed to condemn the Jew to virtual exile, and it was by reason of this commitment that strife soon broke out. To a certain extent conflict was discernible inside the Catholic body, but the teaching there given is so definite and authoritative that the results—a few speeches and brochures by headstrong "theologians," one or the other populistic manifestation, a surplus of silence on the part of leaders—were relatively insignificant. But inside the Lutheran churches (for, despite centralized organization, these were several) matters were much different. It was possible for those who called themselves "German Christians" to organize a large following committed to anti-Semitism and eventually to obtain control of the management (what the Germans term *Verwaltung*) of the church.

It is impossible to outline here the story of a process with which the press has concerned itself for months, and the myriad ramifications of which are still far from clear. I must content myself with pointing out one fact of crucial theological importance: if there was to be a distinction between Aryans and Jews inside the church, then the sacrament of baptism did not confer equality, and Christ's kingdom had really become "of this world." This reasoning no devout Lutheran with theological training could ignore. Lutheran theology had always made baptism the cardinal event of the whole spiritual life, and its vitality had been derived precisely from making a sharp distinction between "this world" and the "other world" of Christ. To a far greater extent than one might have thought possible, pastors and theologians stood their ground. They lacked organs of publicity, and in addition many of them were not ardent supporters of the "management" which had existed under the republic. For my part, I think that Lutheranism need not be ashamed, in the eyes of the future, of what its best men did in 1933. That they lacked the strength to put their convictions into effective practise is, of course, due to a quite obvious thing—the decline of Protestantism among the people as a whole.

Once the "German Christians" were in power, they began necessarily to encounter difficulties. Some of these were due to lack of experience; others are no doubt attributable to an unfortunate overindulgence in oratory and debate. The principal trouble arose, however, out of the given theological situation itself. Five distinct groups appeared on the battle-field. First came the leaders of "German Christianity," eager to effect unity at almost any cost and to carry on in a more or less National-Socialistic way. Second in line was the group of orthodox pastors and theologians, who rallied about the standard of Dr. Bodelschwingh, once elected bishop of the church and still a very powerful personality. Third was the alignment of independents under Professor Karl Barth, who stands on a modified Swiss Calvinist program and from that has fired effective theological hot-shot up and down Germany. A pamphlet to which he gave the title "Theologische Existenz heute!" has, in fact, caused no end of a commotion. Of more importance are two other groups, with which we shall concern ourselves in greater detail.

For quite a number of Mr. Hitler's followers, the "German Christians" were by no means adequately extreme. Some wanted to get rid of the Old Testament entirely; others contented themselves with theories to the effect that Christ was in both race and doctrine anti-Semitic. While the desire for a German church was to some extent evoked by the nationalistic sentiment which characterized political developments, it was fanned into flame by two independent groups. One reflected the moods and experiences of pastors or laymen who had worked with German minorities in other European countries and who had noted with alarm a fairly widespread repudiation of the German heritage of language and tradition. These people wanted a religion which would emphasize national values, thus making Lutheranism the counterpart (e.g.) of what Catholicism is today in Poland.

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The other is far more Nietzchean and Teutonic. It desires a "national church" stripped of teachings undesirable from a martial point of view, and makes short shrift of much that has been sacred to Christians for two thousand years. The most interesting theoretical exposition of this creed is Professor Ernst Bergmann's "Die Deutsche Nationalkirche" (Breslau, 1932), which proposes a state church to which every citizen must belong and inside which certain concessions will be made to Catholics who have renounced allegiance to Rome. But by far the most important protagonist of such a church is Count Reventlow, fiery pamphleteer and editor of the *Reichswart,* who is somewhat less severe toward Catholics and dissenters but whose attack upon the unified Lutheran church of the "German Christians" is so vigorous that he succeeded in eliciting from Herr Rudolf Hess, Hitler's personal representative, what may be construed as either a promise or a permission to receive state aid for the "new religion."

This movement, precisely because it is the more radical, has given Bishop Mueller and his associates no end of trouble. Indeed no one can tell at the present moment what the ultimate outcome will be. Extremists in Germany are working hard for an ultra-nationalistic religion, and it is impossible not to feel that such a creed would get support from large numbers of people for whom nationalism has become *the* faith of the hour. It is even averred that some nominal Catholics would join such a movement, just as Czech divines broke with Rome in 1920. There is, perhaps, more acute anti-Roman feeling in Germany today than there has been at any time since the Reformation, even if official pronouncements by the government have striven to dam the stream. Many leading Hitlerites are profoundly convinced that their idea of government reproduces much of the hierarchical structure of Catholicism; and of course a lingering—by no means so strong as formerly!—admiration for Fascism fosters a regard for Italy that in a measure includes the Vatican. But even under a dictatorship, crowds count.

We are now in a position to deal with the last of the five groups mentioned above. For some years Lutheran sponsors of ecumenical understanding have dealt particularly with the relations between Catholicism and Protestantism which last they strove to interpret as a necessary resistance to certain policies of Rome held by them to be spiritually objectionable. Recently the organ of this group has been a very interesting quarterly known as *Religiöse Besinnung,* edited by Professor Karl Thieme. During August, 1933, it was decided to suspend publication on the ground that Lutheranism had now become "only individual pastors and individual congregations" and was "no longer a church." The editor published a valedictory in which, after summarizing the historic debate between Catholics and Protestants, he wrote:

> Here, then, is the question which we now put to the Roman Catholic Church. There are German evangelical Christians, there are Christian families, there are also, probably, whole believing congregations with their shepherds, all of whom are forced by their consciences to ask for admittance into the one, eternal Church. But they are compelled by those same consciences, by their understanding of the welfare of the Church, and by the anxiety with which their brethren watch the course they are now taking, to insist upon conditions already accorded Slavic Christians—to request that under the guidance of their own shepherds they may, in their own beloved language, render God service and worship according to the ordinances of the Catholic Church. Will this plea be granted or repudiated?

There followed an invitation to those who shared the mood in which this appeal was put forward. One has to have been in Germany recently in order to understand how much bravery this action demanded of its instigator. Of course it was not in any manner hostile to laws passed by the government; but a Lutheranism already hard pressed to keep its head above the flood of waters stood aghast at the new form of "treason" thus voiced. Some of the answers received were manifestations of dismay, quite similar to those which greeted Newman after his weary retreat in Livermore. Yet other replies were quite remarkable restatements of Professor Thieme's views, and occasionally summarized personal spiritual histories of great beauty and value. Some of these I have been privileged to examine. Among them is one by as eminent a professor of history as Germany now possesses. He writes:

> As one who knows exactly the religious and ecclesiastical tendencies now prevailing in that section of the German people which professes the Lutheran faith, I feel able to state with absolute conviction that evangelical Germany is, in part consciously, in part half-consciously, and in part instinctively, sensing a deep desire for unity of faith and even for return to the Catholic Church—a desire which needs only the benevolent welcome of Rome in order to grow.

Since then, with the assistance of one of the greatest Catholic bishops of contemporary Germany, a petition phrasing the attitude of the group has been formulated and presented to the Holy Father. This I cannot reproduce here, although it would, I am sure, interest many not only by reason of the spiritual phenomenon to which it bears witness, but also by reason of the masterly summary of the historic Catholic-Lutheran opposition which it offers. In its wisdom the Holy See will know what answer had best be given. For the mo-

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ment it is sufficient to indicate that in itself—and there is vastly more which might be chronicled—this occurrence serves to indicate that not all is lost. Out of the seeming disorder of the time, there are being born, out of suffering and dismay almost too great to bear, ideas and convictions having a strength and spiritualness to which not many of us could ordinarily aspire.

Of course it would be quite erroneous to suppose that the trend toward reunion with the Church is as strong as the drift toward further manifestations of a nationalistic spirit. The disease from which our civilization suffers most is just this nationalism, and the worst paroxysms have not yet occurred. It did not originate in Germany; it has decidedly not raged worse there than elsewhere. But as I have said before, the ultimate test is what happens in the realm of the spirit, and there the decision has not yet been given. There is an old-fashioned and very simple thing in Christendom called prayer—prayer for forgiveness and for the power to forgive, prayer for bread, and prayer for the union of all in the fold. I should not be surprised if, all our arguing, haranguing and denouncing having been done, we should find that the future of the Church, and of the world as it has become dear to us in memory of our fathers, should be seen to rest with those whose hands are joined in a manner quiet and unafraid, as have been those of the angels in all ages and unto all eternity.

THE GOSPEL OF "SUCCESS"

By JOHN MOODY

ABOUT forty years ago—during the early years of the 1890's—it seemed to me that there was a great awakening among the youth of our land in the direction of modern thought, especially in the fields of religion and philosophy. At least it was then that I began to imbibe the spirit of our modern time. And it was in those years that a certain Great Financial Genius of our day was in the making. He and I were congenial companions, both budding young students of business and finance, trying to absorb the proper principles for fortune-building. Being both quite young, the troubles of the times (for these were panic and depression years) did not concern us so much as the problem of building for the future; we were young philosophers mainly intent on absorbing the "gospel of success."

In those days a certain scholarly teacher of this philosophy was delivering weekly evening lectures to young men and women at his School of Social Science in Union Square, New York, and my ambitious young friend and I were ardent devotees of this professor's teachings. During the autumn of 1893 we attended his great series of talks on the Philosophy of Utility. The first talk, which was the background for them all, was entitled "God and Mammon," and after forty years the gist of it still sticks in my memory.

This was the way it went, if not in these exact words, at least in the essential meaning: "We modern men, unlike our forebears, are for the most part untrammeled by the old superstitious connotations of the two words, 'God' and 'Mammon.' We know that there is no God in the old traditional sense. It has been an age-long illusion, and hard to break down. Even our grandfathers thought there must be what was called a 'Personal God,' but our fathers began to suspect that there might not be, and we ourselves—at least since Darwin's day—simply know that there cannot be a God in the old traditional sense. The discovery of organic evolution is rapidly clearing the ground of this superstition of the ages; and now we know that we humans have evolved, through the process of 'natural selection,' from the lowest forms of life. I doubt not that before long science will show just how life evolved from mere lifeless matter. In the future, as men progress, though they may for long still use the word 'God,' it will connote to them simply the ideal of 'goodness' or 'highmindedness.' It will be a thing to emulate rather than to worship and pray to.

"And the word 'Mammon' is another hobgoblin which we are sweeping away. It was once taught, before these later ages of enlightenment, that men who devoted their energies to the acquisition of wealth, to comforts and human satisfactions, were worshiping at the throne of 'Mammon.' Now Mammon was the old Syrian god of riches, and the word came to denote the spirit of avarice. And so we have the old proverb, 'One cannot serve both God and Mammon.' But we are learning, in our more enlightened time, how properly to interpret this phrase. The man who is striving for wealth—making two blades of grass grow where one grew before—is not worshiping Mammon in this old superstitious sense. No, such a man is the most constructive force our modern civilization can boast; he is furthering human progress and building for posterity. True, too many men still are greedy and selfish; but it is a far finer thing for a man to devote his life to material wealth-building than to waste his days, as did the monks of old, in worshiping a God who does not exist. For wealth, once created, spreads; it builds civilizations, raises mankind to higher levels of culture.

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"Consequently, although it seems like a paradox until we think it through, it is a fact that the 'worship' of God (in the correct modern sense) and the worship of Mammon (also in the correct modern sense) are really one and the same thing. For the only way to bring about and maintain a state of 'goodness' (progress) in this modern world, is to strive mightily for the creation and development and growth of material wealth. And so I say to you, forget that stupid old proverb, 'One cannot serve both God and Mammon'; in the true sense, one *must* serve both."

Such was the hocus-pocus soil from which we tiny seedlings of forty years ago hoped to grow up as mighty oaks. This lecture hall was always crowded with young men who, like my friend and myself, were drinking in and hoping to apply this gospel of success in the coming years. Many of us fell by the wayside, but some became in time—as did my friend—monuments to the philosophy.

Only a few months ago I had occasion to make a brief visit to the gorgeous Throne Room where, during the post-war years of plenty, this friend of my youth was wont to sit and spin his mighty financial web. He had become, after thirty years or more of devotion to the gospel of success, one of the big men of our time. Having known me so well in his youthful days, he had often during his years of progress, called me in and made me listen to his words of wisdom. But now for several years we had met but seldom; for we had disagreed on the outlook after 1929—he still seeing rainbows and I seeing yawning chasms—and he no doubt thought it a waste of time to talk to me.

The Throne Room was vacant when I entered, and I took the usual easy chair to await the arrival of the Presence. Nearly four years had passed since I had visited this place of official opulence and splendor. It was the same room except that things seemed rather dusty. The beautiful walnut panels, with the life-size portraits of the Great Financial Genius and other famous Makers of America still graced the walls; the rich tapestries and rugs, the elaborate lighting fixtures, the large Circassian walnut desk with the inlaid mother-of-pearl swivel chair—all the grand paraphernalia, even to the bronze figures of near-nude ladies on the mantel—were in their places as of old. But the spacious room now seemed to have more of the atmosphere of an ancient Egyptian mausoleum than that of the sanctum sanctorum of a Great Financial Genius. Rather grimly I reflected that the only thing needed was to replace the Circassian walnut desk with the sarcophagus of King Tutankhamen, and the illusion would be complete.

And now my friend, the Great Financial Genius, appeared upon the scene, slipping in through the secret door set in the walnut panels as of old. He welcomed me in his usual effusive way; but what a change in attitude and manner! Arrogance and assurance were utterly gone; condescension and meekness had replaced them. For he was no longer a Great Financial Genius. He was a mere man, stone broke; and he looked and acted the part. His pride utterly crushed, he was actually humble.

We talked for a long time. He told me the whole crumbling story of his schemes, his dreams, his struggles, his blunders and stupidities of the last four years; how everything had finally gone to smash, how his mammoth fortune had been swept away, and how millions in appalling debts, with a hundred lawsuits, were crushing him to earth. There was no way out for him; it was the deluge. And he was overcome with fear, for perhaps prison bars loomed ahead.

Then at last, as I arose to go, leaning wearily on his desk, he said to me, almost in a whisper:

"Do you remember, old man, that professor bird who steered us along forty years ago? He used to make fun of that old saw, 'You can't serve both God and Mammon.' He said it was a bromide, and we believed him. But, by God, it's true!"

Prayer of a Social Worker

Grant me, O God, for each new day
A hopeful heart, steadfast and strong;
For they are weak—and I, how weak.
Teach me the wisdom of a smile
For their absurdities, and my own!

Keep me, their servant, on my way
Lest patience fail, hearing their long
And sorry tales. I know they seek
Of me, what I have met long while
From Thee, pity for every moan.

Give courage that will not confess
Defeat, but struggle toward redress
For those the world calls base
(Because for them it has no place):
These inarticulate and bound.

Take from me all complacency,
That I may give, by them, to Thee
My very best. O let me see
Through all the outward ugliness,
Thy image and Thy face.

Make me to labor no whit less
Content, than to achieve; success
To count the patient way we trace:
The plans begun, recast; each "case"
Where faith, resource and hope are found.

And give me that true charity
That never falls away. Teach me
To understand concerning Thee,
Thy needy and Thy poor. Witless
And pauper, I beseech Thy grace. Amen.

DOROTHY C. McGRATH.

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CAN LAW STOP LYNCHING?

By JOHN T. GILLARD

The writer's answer to the question in the title of this article is affirmative. He cites not only how lynching can be prevented by law, but also legal measures that have failed either of effectively preventing lynchings or of being accepted by the populace. His data is helpful in reaching a just appreciation of the difficulties in the way of overcoming race prejudices and anticipating mob terrorism. That these two things must be removed and sane, decent government replace them, no respectable person would deny.—The Editors.

AS A RESULT of the recent impetus given the mob spirit, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People has announced that a federal anti-lynching bill will be introduced in the United States in January. Senator Edward P. Costigan, of Colorado, will introduce the bill, according to recent news dispatches. The measure is expected to receive the support of several prominent senators who have already urged the passage of such a bill. This will be the second attempt of the organization to have passed a federal law against lynching and mob violence. Now that the federal government has gone in for breaking up the kidnaping racket and imprisoning bootleggers on income-tax verdicts, it is conceivable that it may be interested in the lynching racket.

In the period between 1882-1932 there were 4,600 lynchings in the United States. Of this number 1,286 were whites. So far this year some record as many as 40 lynchings, depending upon one's definition of lynching. Dr. Monroe N. Work, Director of Records and Research, Tuskegee Institute, Alabama, who is the most conservative and authoritative source, informs me that the record so far this year is 22, four of which were white. It is interesting to note that in the past 53 years California has had 42 lynchings, of which 40 were white—a grim reminder of the days when "lynch law" ruled the West. Missouri has had 120 lynchings, of which 69 have been Negroes.

It is a fact full of doleful significance that of the tens of thousands of mob participants a careful study of the records has disclosed for the period of 1900-1930 only 12 instances in which a total of 67 individual convictions were secured. This means that only about eight-tenths of one percent of the lynchers since 1900 have been convicted. That almost no lynchers in the United States have ever been punished by local courts suggests the futility of local legislation and prompts the question: may not a federal anti-lynching law cope more effectively with the serious situation with which the country is now confronted?

Groups under emotional tension act in conformity with generally accepted attitudes and practises —they follow the mass mind. Ordinarily the social-minded of a community predominate and hold in check anti-social tendencies. When a man of Governor Rolph's reputed standing, however, expresses himself as favorable to the mob he respectablizes its contempt for duly enacted law and stamps a disreputable thought-pattern with the trade-mark of decency, thus encouraging further anti-social activity.

It can hardly be denied that just at present all law would seem to be under a cloud because of the maladministration of the courts. The noticeable mob tendency of today is only one aspect of an almost universal disrespect for law which makes possible the gangster age and the racket rash. Undoubtedly the very first prescription which must be written for the cure of society is a good general tonic. A healthier and more virile social structure, marked by better economic stability and greater social contentment, is an immediate desideratum.

The psychological basis of the lynch spirit would seem to be a fear psychosis. This is evident in the lynching of California's kidnapers. Kidnapings have become so prevalent and newspapers have described them with so much vividness and space that nearly everyone has developed a subconscious fear: husbands and wives fear for each other; parents fear for their children. A fear psychosis is discernible in the readiness to lynch Negroes. Most of the lynchings are in the South, where 9,000,000 of the 12,000,000 Negroes in the United States live. The relation between Negro population and lynching is seen by the following table, with the states listed in the order of their relative density of Negro population:

Percent of population Negro:	Lynchings: Total number (1882-1932)	Lynching position of state	Lynchings of Negroes	Lynching position of state
50-40 percent				
Mississippi	544	1	504	1
South Carolina	156	10	152	9
Georgia	501	2	465	2
40-30 percent				
Louisiana	383	4	327	4
Alabama	339	5	295	5
Florida	267	7	244	6
30-20 percent				
North Carolina	97	14	82	12
Arkansas	284	6	225	7
Virginia	100	13	83	11

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Some of the counties in these states are preponderantly black. The white man in the South refuses to forget the days of the reconstruction period when Northern carpet-baggers and Southern scalawags used the freedmen for their own vile purposes. The white-robed night-riders of the Ku Klux Klan gave romance and glamor to the real and fancied evils of the day when the Negro was in power. Newspapers of today, films such as "The Birth of a Nation," and popular tradition have conspired to brand the Negro as a base criminal capable of anything vile if not kept "in his place." The South may love its "Mammy" and "Uncle Tom," but it fears the collective race.

Like any fear psychosis, the white man's fear of the black may result in three possible courses of action: flight, conciliation or destruction. Convinced of his inborn superiority and God-given dominion over the Negro, and feeling the security of national numbers, the white man does not see the necessity of immediate flight. At the same time, a sense of unlimited right on his part and the absence of right on the part of the Negro convinces the white man of the futility of seeking conciliation with the black man either in the sense of trying to understand or to help him. Only the few intellectual and moral leaders who are secure in, or disdainful of, their social standing can "afford" to stoop approvingly toward the Negro.

Gladly would the white man get rid of the Negro if he could. Ordinarily his destructive desire is satisfied with rendering the Negro innocuous by destroying his political, educational, social and economic life. In this manner the Negro is kept "in his place" and incapable of actualizing his potentialities. Occasionally, however, the normal sublimation of the destructive instinct is not sufficient. Under the stress of some great emotional strain an individual must be sacrificed as vicarious victim for the whole race. A lynching affords emotional relief with the assurance of absolute safety in numbers and relative immunity from punishment in the courts.

Psychologically, one way to hold in check the concrete expressions of group fear reactions at the prospect of remote danger is to establish a counter-fear of immediate and certain punishment for mob violence. The certainty of immediate legal punishment will dominate and hold in check fear of the remote and problematical. The enactment of stringent laws with a guarantee of swift sanction ought to put an effective curb on lynching.

Anti-lynching legislation, as studied by James Chadbourne in "Lynching and the Law," is broadly of two types. It is punitive or prophylactic, on the one hand, seeking to punish when a lynching has occurred, and on the other hand, trying to anticipate and prevent lynching. If the philosophy underlying punishment is prevention rather than retribution, the division is only pragmatic.

The main types of punishment in anti-lynching legislation are: (a) punishing lynchers by making lynching and mob violence statutory crimes; (b) fining counties and cities in which lynchings have occurred; (c) removing delinquent peace officers. The most popular types of legislation designed to prevent lynchings by anticipation are: (a) employing military force; (b) changing the venue of the trial; (c) calling special term of court; (d) removing prisoner to jail of adjoining county.

The "Corpus Juris" (volume XXXVIII, 328) notes:

> Lynching has no technical legal meaning. It is merely a descriptive phrase used to signify the lawless acts of persons who violate established law at the time they commit the acts. . . . The offense of lynching is unknown to common law.

Six states have made lynching a crime *sui generis*, namely, Alabama, Indiana, Kentucky, Virginia and North Carolina, with Georgia making lynching a statutory crime without defining it. Four states have made mob violence a crime: Illinois, Pennsylvania, New Jersey and West Virginia. Four states have provisions for accessorial liability: Alabama, Indiana, Kansas and Kentucky, the last providing a penalty for attempted lynching. Where death is part of the statutory offense, the maximum punishments are life imprisonment or death. Where injury only is necessary, the maximum varies from five to fifteen years.

Seven of the ten states having statutory definitions of the crime of lynching or mob violence have had lynchings since the respective enactments: Alabama, 6; Illinois, 8; Kansas, 4; Kentucky, 6; North Carolina, 37; Virginia, 1; West Virginia, 1. In view of these figures and the fact that all the lynchers, except one in Alabama, went unpunished, the efficacy of state legislation is open to serious question.

Legal apparatus for monetary recovery by the family of the victim against the city or county in which the lynching occurred seems to be a more effective check on lynching than anything else. The family of one of California's lynch victims has signified its intention of suing the state for damages. Eleven states provide for such monetary recovery, the amounts ranging from $1,000 in Nebraska to $10,000 in Pennsylvania. Professor Chadbourne made a special study of this provision in South Carolina. He found that each county which had been fined has had no more lynchings, and that the average number of lynchings per year in the state has declined sharply after the infliction of each penalty. This probably explains the fact that although South Carolina is second in Negro population it is ninth in reference to number of lynchings.

The usual objection to legislating against the pocket-book is that it is unfair to penalize all the

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taxpayers of a county for the acts of a group the members of which are usually propertyless and therefore not taxpayers. In justification of the law, however, it may be said that lynching will never be stopped until public opinion stops it. The respectable element in a community must be moved to action, and the facts show that such action is quicker when delay costs money. While many in the community may not approve of lynching they must share some of the moral guilt for preserving a negative attitude. The common good demands positive action; and a negative attitude is deserving of penalty.

Nine states make provisions for removal of peace officers who failed to prevent a lynching when the person killed or injured was in their custody. Statistics show a sharp decline in lynchings after an ouster. Perhaps if the sheriff of St. Joseph, Missouri, had assurance that handing over the accused Negro to the mob would cost him his job he would have made a more determined effort to resist the mob.

From the foregoing it is evident that where a counter-fear, either of personal punishment, monetary penalty or loss of a job, is certain to follow expression of group fear, results are usually forthcoming. Some sort of anti-lynching legislation has been attempted three times in Georgia, South Carolina and Texas, twice in Missouri, and once in Maryland, Mississippi, Tennessee and Arkansas. But the difficulties of overcoming local antipathy long enough to secure adequate legislation, or local sentiment long enough to enforce existing legislation are sufficiently imposing to make interested parties hesitate. As Mr. Walter White, secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People noted, in speaking of the proposed federal anti-lynching bill:

> We are seeking a federal law against lynching because our twenty-five years' experience has taught us that rarely if ever do local or state authorities act against mobs. Federal intervention is the only power local communities fear.

Attempts to secure federal action in the matter of lynching have been sporadic since the first efforts back in the middle of the last century. The movement was begun by a North Carolina Negro representative of the Reconstruction Period. Later it took the form of an international movement to protect aliens. Previous efforts were crystallized in 1920 in the Dyer Anti-lynching Bill, so-called from Representative L. C. Dyer, of Missouri, who introduced it. The bill was designed to protect citizens as well as aliens. The bill passed the House in 1922, only to be defeated by a filibuster of Southern senators. The bill would give jurisdiction to the federal courts to punish county officers and lynchers, and for the forfeiture of $10,000 by any county which is the scene of a lynching. To date the bill has not been passed. One of the strongest arguments against the Dyer Bill was its alleged unconstitutionality. One of the questions in the questionnaire sent out to prominent jurists, lawyers and legislators by Professor Chadbourne in gathering material for his book was:

> Please state your approval or disapproval of the proposed Dyer Bill making lynching a federal crime, with a $10,000 penalty on the offending county.

Out of 213 responses to the question, 194 expressed emphatic disapproval, only 14 approval, and 7 were qualified.

The main advantage of a federal law covering lynching would be the removal of the case from the hands of local authorities who have proved that in nearly every case they are only too willing to cover up the evidence. The chances of securing convictions from authorities devoid of lynch patterns of thought and having no local votes to worry about are much better than they would be, for instance, in the Eastern Shore of Maryland where a local State's Attorney can successfully defy the sovereign authority of the state of Maryland.

While nothing is more to be desired than a federal anti-lynching bill, the wholesale opposition of Southern lawyers and judges to the Dyer Bill makes the possibility of passing such a measure very remote. At the same time, the general national reaction to the recent lynching outrages, brought to a head by President Roosevelt's pungent, though passing, condemnation of "mass murder," made before a recent meeting of the Federal Council of Churches, in Washington, gives some assurance that it is "now or never" for the passage of any federal anti-lynching law.

Aries

The village street is quiet,
The church tower
Points to a timeless
And aërial hour.

The street lamps shine
On houses still and white,
And faintly touch
The wintry elms with light.

Dark branches and faint branches
Intricate, high,
Raise their enchanted thickets
Towards the sky.

And there, behold,
His wild horns come to naught,
Aries, the Ram of Stars,
Himself is caught!

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH.

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NATURALIZING ALIENS

By HAROLD FIELDS

THE AVERAGE person is under the impression that the work of naturalizing our foreign born must, by now, be severely curtailed because of the drastic drop in arriving immigrants. Though the conclusion is correct, the reasoning is false.

We are naturalizing fewer aliens than in many a decade not because of decreased arrivals but rather because of increased fees. It is only since 1930 that a decided drop has taken place in the numbers of those coming to our shores for permanent residence, and those who arrived here then will not be eligible for naturalization until 1935 and after. Those who are applying for citizenship today entered the United States during the years up to 1928, in which time from a quarter to a third of a million arrivals were recorded each year.

The entire process of naturalization is part of a program for the assimilation of our population and of a plan aimed toward a homogeneity in its complexion. The theory and philosophy are that in becoming legal Americans, aliens do so only after they have become "American-minded," that is, versed in our language, and sympathetic and intelligent toward our customs and toward our institutions. But like the conclusion as to why there are fewer seeking citizenship, the generalization in this instance again is true but the reasoning is false.

Those who today seek citizenship are not generally prompted to take that step solely by reason of a spiritual oneness with our country, but rather because of material, factual bases that we ourselves impose upon them. These bases, which form some of the most potent, driving and forceful motives leading to citizenship today, are offshoots of our present, industrial situation. Witness, for instance, the policy of private firms and public bodies in not employing aliens. Frequently, public relief agencies render no support to unemployed aliens, without regard to how law-abiding they may be nor how steady, as workers, they may have been.

Forces like these, therefore, quite naturally compel aliens to seek citizenship, as they themselves frankly admit, because of the urge from without rather than because of any logical or spiritual development from within. This was confirmed in a recent survey that was made of almost thirty-six hundred applicants for citizenship, representing over forty nationalities. It was found that 29 percent took that step in order to get or to hold jobs, while 27 percent gave patriotic reasons as their motive, 19 percent cited contemplated trips abroad, 12½ percent stated they hoped thereby to expedite the arrival of their families, others offered such reasons as the feeling of shame that they, as aliens, felt before their own native-born children, while quite a number confessed to the desire to qualify for widows' pensions, or old-age pensions, or workmen's compensation. These privileges are offered to aliens as a reward for following through the process of naturalization and they only serve to speed the acquisition of citizenship among our foreign born.

It would be far better were distinctions and discriminations like these removed and an equal accord applied to all who are legal residents of this country.

Yet, despite this background of mundane, prosaic attitudes toward citizenship, there is an underlying, sincere belief and faith in this government of ours among these peoples of other nationalities. They evidence this through their high proportionate ratio among our voters, their proportionately low ratio among our criminal groups, and their high ratio among those seeking further education. They make good Americans, wholesome additions to our population.

We stress wrong values in emphasizing the reasons that prompt the foreign born to assume citizenship; we would do much better to evaluate the uses to which they put such citizenship and to measure the lives they lead as citizens. In the light of such measurements, the newly naturalized citizen will be found to be a distinct credit to our country.

To continue with the work of the naturalization of the foreign born is basic in any Americanization program. Its results are epitomized in an assimilated people. But unfortunately, the mechanics of naturalization are themselves hampering the process. The statistics for the past three years show a definite decline in the number who are taking this step. Thus the three last years (1929-1932) show a drop of over 500,000 seeking to initiate their citizenship procedure, as compared with the three years preceding that time. That is not because the requirements have been made more difficult; they remain the same. Nor is it because facilities or attitudes have changed; none of these is in any way different from what it was in former years. Nor is it due to a diminution in the numbers eligible to apply; that has been explained away earlier.

The cause for the decline in naturalization is solely and distinctly due to the fact that with the inception of our depression years, there was an increase of from 400 percent to 700 percent in the

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cost of naturalization so that the number that has been able to apply, has steadily decreased. This increase in cost for government fees, when added to the other costs incidental to the process of citizenship, has been estimated to reach from $50 to $75. Such a sum is obviously a staggering figure to be met in these days and accounts in large measure for the decrease in the numbers applying for their papers.

Furthermore, there is a keen interest in the complexion of those who today seek citizenship. By sex and by race they evidence growing changes in the composition of our newly naturalized citizens. Women are increasing among the proportion of those who are seeking their second papers. Thus in 1932 they numbered 29.8 percent of those who obtained certificates of citizenship whereas in 1931 they constituted only 26.2 percent. This increase is due to the enactment of the Cable Act by which women can obtain papers in their own name, as well as because of the additional provisions that expedite their advent to, or resumption of, citizenship. Afternoon and morning classes for women in homes, in religious buildings, in settlement houses and in community centers are increasing wherever private aid is making that possible. Unfortunately, however, public aid is decreasing under the requirements of questionable budget economies in education.

Not only are the numbers applying for citizenship decreasing, and the proportion of women seeking their final papers increasing, but the national groups seeking naturalization are also changing. Where formerly natives of Italy, Russia and Poland constituted the leading groups among our newly naturalized citizens, we find today that the British Empire tops the list—with Italians, Germans and Poles following, in that order.

Reasons for this change are the fact that there have been relatively greater numbers arriving from the British Empire (because of the Johnson Law of 1924) plus a change in attitude of the average Britisher coming here. The Englishman or native of any other part of the empire, who came here up to 1914, valued his allegiance to his motherland so highly, that when he renounced his allegiance to his native country, he did so after having resided here for ten, fifteen or more years. The Englishman of today, having gone through the post-war years, has felt the economic distress and the change in social forces so deeply that he does not hesitate to indicate his intention to renounce his allegiance to Great Britain within one year after his residence here, in order to ally himself with us in every sense, and thus better his own personal status.

The problem facing us today is that of citizenizing and Americanizing our foreign born. In 1930 there were slightly more than 6,000,000 aliens in this country. Over 1,500,000 of them were not yet of age and hence could not become American citizens. Almost 1,000,000 of them had not been in the United States the required five-year minimum period to qualify for citizenship and hence were necessarily still aliens. We can feel quite certain that these two groups will undoubtedly become American citizens by the time the next census is taken. To account for the continued alien status of the remaining 3,500,000, we must turn to several factors that they themselves raise as justifications or warrants for their position.

Unlike the first two groups, one cannot offer definite figures for each group since an estimate of the numbers involved depends on one's experience with this problem. One division however is made up of hundreds of thousands who cannot afford the present fees for naturalization during this depression. Then, there are other countless thousands who cannot qualify under the present regulations for citizenship. This latter group are those whose arrival cannot be verified and who are thereby debarred from citizenship. There is hope that these aliens will soon be helped by congressional legislation, for quite a number of bills were introduced in both Houses during the last session which aimed to legalize the residence of aliens who came to this country before the 1924 quota law went into effect. This would be wholesome legislation since, under our laws, these foreign born cannot be deported and cannot be naturalized. There is nothing to be gained in forcing them into a state of permanent alienage, particularly since many of them have married American-born girls, have carried on American establishments, and have raised American-born children.

Finally, other groups that have not become naturalized, comprise those that are the result of a lack of access to schools or organizations that might aid them toward citizenship, while still others, strange as it may sound, lack knowledge of how to proceed.

Subtracting in this computation those aliens who would proceed toward naturalization, were legal, social or financial handicaps made more considerate, leaves us with a residuum small and relatively simple to approach. It is not a residuum of Communists nor of negativists. What we require is the means for aiding those who do seek citizenship and who are entitled to it; we must acquaint those who are receptive to it but know not how to proceed.

If through social, educational and political approaches, we endeavor to reach these aliens, there is a definite certainty that the numbers of aliens registered in our next census will be equal only to the small number of immigrants admitted into this country between 1934 and 1940.

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VICTORY IN THE CORN BELT

By CHARLES MORROW WILSON

WHEN I was younger, and more beautiful, and worked on a daily newspaper, I was once sent back into my native Ozarks to cover some random turns of backwoods agriculture. As companion, I had a dapper young college boy, who being from Fort Smith, Arkansas, considered himself big town fry and truly a man of the world.

We went into a restaurant that was the northeast corner of a crossroads store. We ordered scrambled eggs, but my companion, not to be overlooked, made some loud and smartish remarks as to the probable biological condition of the eggs. The storekeeper rolled up his sleeves and laid aside his frying pan to state his position. He explained that he always had served the very best eggs his henlot afforded, that customers had never been disappointed, that he paid more heed to the fare of his trade than that of his own family, indeed. Then he viewed my companion diagonally and made ultimatum:

"So—if you want scrambled eggs, I'll give you scrambled eggs, and if you want trouble, I can give you trouble."

In a sense that come-back typifies to me Secretary Wallace's "redemption" tour of the Midwest. He laid all cards squarely upon the table with the plain-spoken ultimatum that his administration stands for a just deal for the just farmer; that it knows specifically that agriculture is improving; that the government has no house to offer the pastoral "hell-raiser."

The Secretary's Corn Belt tour was first of all a victory in intellectual honesty. He showed specific trails and defined specific issues. In his Des Moines address he said: "Instead of sliding down the hill farther, we have turned around and we are climbing back up. We know that corn, instead of being worth $.10 on the farm as it was a year ago, is $.30 on the farm and that the farmer who needs cash can soon get loans of $.45 a bushel on the farm. We know that wheat, instead of being $.30 a bushel on the farm, is $.70. We know that hogs, instead of being $2 a hundred, are around $3.50 on the farm. We know that farm prices are rising, and that you and I, through honorable cooperation, can and will keep them rising."

Supporting this contention, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, perhaps the most outspoken bureau of federal government, reports that purchasing power of farm products has risen to the neighborhood of 71 percent of pre-war purchasing power; that exports of farm products, thanks to cotton, is within 3 percent of pre-war level; that the farm index is rising faster than the cost-of-living index.

Addressing the Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities, Secretary Wallace made razor-sharp definition of agrarian paths: "For the first time we are forced to take steps for the years ahead. Fat land lies idle because, with the surplus of production, there seems no justification now for reclaiming it, and cruelly bad land is being worked by poverty-stricken families, wearing out their lives to no good purpose, carrying themselves, their neighbors and their communities down to the meanest sort of an existence, in a welter of tax relinquency, impossible debt, and deteriorating local institutions."

He announced further that in event we are forced into a dyed-in-the-wool era of nationalism and domestic consumption, the administration, through the Agricultural Adjustment channels, stands ready to reclassify the nation's productive land, to embark a policy of punch-clock regulation of all farm planting, harvesting and marketing; that call such a course Communism, Socialism or democracy as you like, it can be, and if necessary will be, undertaken to the end of social justice and fairer play.

But possibilities for a continued export and international trade are now definitely brighter, and the Secretary believes that the Farm Act scheme of domestic allotment and reduction bounties will win; that next year's crop can be reduced by at least 35,000,000 more acres, which should bring us very close to, if not upon, our current goal of pre-war farm prices.

The Secretary spoke in quiet conviction, and with his strange, spiritual fire, his most magnetic and most winning resource. I believe that he was speaking from his own heart, to the heart of the American nation. I further believe that the administration has met the situation, and that the field is theirs.

Perhaps the most significant effort to delve into the real mind of the real farmer of the Corn Belt was made by the Des Moines, Iowa, *Register-Leader*. That newspaper sent out a staff of reporters to interview personally about 3,000 typical farm family heads, both owners and renters of productive lands, of whom they asked a number of pertinent and revealing questions.

Asked whether they approve of farm strikes, 14.28 percent of these farmers answer that they do; 77.15 percent are emphatically opposed, and 8.57 percent are neutral. Asked whether they favor federal loans on unsold corn crops, 56.86 percent do, 29.42 are opposed, and 13.27 percent are neutral. Asked whether or not they approve generally of Franklin D. Roosevelt and his Agricultural Adjustment Administration 72.42 answered "Yes"; 10.34 percent, "No"; and 17.24 percent were neutral.

If the late listing is typical, and there is every reasonable ground for believing that it is, then evidence stands that about three-fourths, certainly a safe plurality, of the Midwest agrarian public stands with the administration, while a fraction over one-tenth part stands opposed. News evidence suggests clearly that the portion of this left-wing which is actively or destructively opposed is far less than 10 percent, and further that its conduct is based essentially upon desperation

Through recent travels in the Corn Belt, I am impressed greatly by the far-prevailing silence and tranquillity, and the rather astonishing scarcity of "spot news." But personally, I was not astonished. I have been among farmers most of my life, and as a newspaper reporter I have covered various farm crises—floods, droughts and famine. I believe the American farmer, on the whole, the

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sanest, best-balanced type of our citizenry; the type least given to panic, exclamation, tears or loud laughter. During the great drought winter of 1930-1931, for example, when thirteen Southern and border states found famine and starvation at their door; when millions of poor farmers were receiving temporary aid from the Red Cross, and other agencies, I spent three months among the temporarily destitute 700,000 farm folks of Arkansas, writing of their plight for a New York paper.

There was little really to tell. Want was widespread, but the famine itself was silent as autumn mist. No one believed it would last. Everyone was confident that the new crop season would bring about another era of plenty. There was virtually no disorder or radical agitation. And the new crop did bring a year of plenty, and the great American famine now stands forgotten.

The Corn Belt is not suffering from famine or hunger. Its people, in the main, are healthy, and happy, harmonious if poor. Many of them made good livings even in 1933. There is fair reason to predict that more will make good livings in 1934. Good earth builds good hope, and the great body of the Corn Belt is neither down nor out.

Neither is the Midwest a well-populated oasis for "hell-raisers." The other day a member of the President's Cabinet told me that the most of the several instances of minor violences in the Corn Belt during recent weeks have been traced to the misguided zeal of four or five undergraduates of a New York City university, all of them with non-American names; all of them apparently imbued with an adolescent, sophomoric craving to "start something." So they have trooped forth to organize village down-and-outs and ne'er-do-wells into would-be combat units. If this is the case, then like most other collegiate prankings, the show has turned out to be both trite and puny, deceiving no one save possibly a few parlor pinks and down-town radicals of Manhattan Island.

The National Farm Holiday Association, at this writing, is the administration's outstanding opponent in the Midwest. Claiming substantial membership in seventeen Central States, the Association is headed by Milo Reno, veteran farm party organizer, who outlines his platform tersely: "We aren't radicals or Bolshevists. We are simply dirt farmers and we're asking that the farmers who produce the nation's food be fully assured of production cost. We believe the government's plan to destroy food and reduce crops wicked at a time when millions of hungry men and women walk the roads and streets."

Mr. Reno has called on his membership to open officially a no-buy, no-sell strike, which, should it work, seems to be the most direct possible route back to complete peasantry. But the great weight of evidence shows that the strike is not taking place, not even in one considerable area. This Milo Reno readily and candidly admits. The farm strike, as a drive to keep foods from markets, has not yet been attempted save in isolated localities in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa. It may be noted that in some instances these localities were headquarters for I. W. W. activities and petty mal-doings fifteen years ago. This the Farmer's Holiday Association also concedes. Milo Reno states frankly that the alleged farm strike is essentially hopeless as an economic weapon. But as a publicist he evidently recognizes the value of front-page news mention, and as a professional farm organizer, he declares that great good is being done by presenting the situation forcefully to the powers at Washington.

But it happens that the administration has recognized the farm issue as one of vital importance from the start; that no issue has drawn a greater share of legislative thought during the past nine months; nor a greater share of governmental labor. Monetary policies, revenue policies, strivings in international relations, have been more considerate of farm needs than has been the case in many—obviously too many—years.

Mrs. Roosevelt, in a recent address to the Junior League of New York, typified a pertinent thought-trend in saying: "Few revolutions have come about in history except as agrarian revolutions, the result of the desperation of people on the land. Many of us would profit greatly by a realization of the conditions on the land in this country. . . . Either we are going to have to build a new world and we are going to try to bring about different conditions, or else I shouldn't be enormously surprised to see this country in a very different situation from what we have now."

That the national administration is striving to know, interpret, and to better the dilemma of farms is beyond possibility of question. This fact is both encouraging and novel. The farm voice is finally being heard in Washington through channels other than the switchboards of the farm organization and congressional politician.

Needless to say, leaders of farm organizations do not present a sure polaris of farm opinion. The opposite is likely to be true, since surprisingly few leaders of farm organizations are themselves farmers. Mr. Reno, for example, gregarious and colorful factotum of the Farmer's Holiday Association, is a professional farm organizer, and there is a difference, you know, between the swivel chair and the turning plow as accouterments of work, and as shapers of opinion. With all due regard for his talents and ideals, I cannot help feeling that Reno's avowed purpose of forcefully presenting the Midwestern farmers' case to the powers of Washington is as superfluous as a Republican vote in Arkansas. The case had been forcefully and tellingly presented even before March 4, 1933, and it has assuredly stayed in the limelight since.

In speaking to farm crowds of the Midwest the Secretary of Agriculture asserted: "Violence, destruction of property and bloodshed solve no problems. You can't get more of the consumer's dollar by keeping milk away from his children, and you certainly don't endear him to the cause of the farmer."

Secretary Wallace continues to point out quietly and with true Jeffersonian logic that dissenters still fail to show any constructive egress or path forward from the dilemma of farms. He claims, and I believe fairly, that the preceding national administration carried on a policy of feeble evasion, save for political sops which actually further blockaded farm exports and heaped greater indebtedness on productive land.

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On the other hand he carries a pocket notebook full of audited figures on what the Agricultural Adjustment Administration has actually accomplished in the line of farm relief. Wheat farmers in 1,450 wheat-growing counties have agreed to reduce next year's planting 7,800,000 acres and are receiving benefit payments of about $100,000,000. In the South 10,000,000 acres of cotton have been taken out of production, the surplus reduced 4,000,000 bales and benefit payments of $110,000,000 distributed to growers, and the price of cotton raised from $.05 to $.10 a pound. Tobacco growers are guaranteed $.17 in place of $.04 for their next year's crop, plus a $10,000,000 total of benefits for acreage reduction.

If the campaign to reduce corn and hog production by 25 percent is successful, the administration proposes to be able to distribute $350,000,000 in domestic allotment benefits to producers of these essentials by February of 1935. The government proposes to distribute about 400,000,000 pounds of surplus pork to the non-buying needy this winter. Benefit payments to farmers are promised by the first of the year. The dairying situation is under surveillance for remedy. The cash value of the 1933 rice crop is 50 percent greater than the 1932 yield. Production control, long practised in every other important industry, is at last making its way into the realms of farming.

"When a general is fighting a battle, he does not change his plans without good reason. We see no reason for abandoning our plan which is receiving splendid support from the overwhelming majority of American farmers."

I do not say that the great battle for farm redemption is yet fully won, or the crisis finally met. But I do say that the administration through Secretary Wallace has won an outstanding victory both intellectually and ethically in defining terms frankly, and in facing a vital and complex issue with a front of logical conviction and invincible faith.

LARGE CATHOLIC FAMILIES

By ROBERT J. O'CONNOR

DESPITE the dearth of evidence as to the relative size of families of the various religious denominations, the opinion is prevalent among Catholic writers that the Catholic family is larger than its non-Catholic neighbor.

In his "Declining Liberty and Other Papers" Monsignor John A. Ryan, in a paraphrase of Tertullian, says in part: "We, too, are of yesterday, but we shall be the America of tomorrow; we shall be the majority. . . . We shall dominate because we shall have the numbers. . . ."

Again, Father J. Elliott Ross writing in THE COMMONWEAL of June 10, 1931, calculated a Catholic birth rate of 32.3 per thousand for 1930 as compared with the birth rate of the United States registration area of 18.9 per thousand. This computation was subsequently shown to be incorrect.

However, Bishop Noll of Fort Wayne in THE COMMONWEAL of July 1, 1931, writes: ". . . Few would dispute that the birth rate among Catholics is higher than among the country's population generally. . . ."

Similar assertions appear frequently in the Catholic press. Are they based upon actual studies or upon the a priori assumption that Catholic families must be larger because of the Church's stand on family limitation? Probably they arise from the fact that the foreign born have larger families than the native born and that a large percentage of Catholics have been foreign born. But it has been shown that the families of the children of the foreign born do not differ greatly in size from the families of the children of the native born.

A study made in 1925 of the families of people appearing in "Who's Who" according to their religious affiliation is set out in "The Builders of America" by Huntington and Whitney. Deleting from this study the minor denominations, it shows the following results:

	Children per father or mother	Estimated children per man	Probable great-grandchildren per thousand persons
Lutheran	3.3	2.6	1,950
Baptist	3.1	2.5	1,560
Methodist	2.9	2.4	1,455
Disciples	2.8	2.4	1,450
Catholic	3.3	2.3	1,310
Presbyterian	2.8	2.3	1,230
Congregational	2.7	2.2	1,125
Unitarian	2.9	2.1	1,025
Episcopalian	2.8	2.1	910
Jews	2.6	1.9	755

The first column shows the actual number of children per father or mother. The second column shows the estimated number of children per man, making allowance for the percentage of unmarried and also for the married who are childless. In the case of the Catholics the percentage of unmarried and the married but childless lower the number of children per man considerably.

The relative standing of the Protestant denominations is about what one would expect: the more intellectual and wealthier sects have the smaller families.

The poor showing of the Jews is rather unexplainable except that perhaps the Jews in "Who's Who" are not representative of the Jewish people in general as far as families are concerned.

The writer kept a record of all deaths in a Midwestern city for the period of one year (July 1, 1932, to July 1, 1933), taking from the obituary notices in the daily press, from the county death and probate records, the age, birthplace, religious denomination and number of surviving children of the decedent. While the study is localized, yet the decedents came from all parts of the United States and Europe. They include a large percentage of rural born and raised, so that it is not precisely an urban study. Again they range from one end to the other of the social and economic sphere of a Midwestern city. The following table shows the relative standing of the various denominations, including both native and foreign born. Only adults are reported.

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	Single	Married		
	Number Deceased	Number Deceased	Average number of children surviving	Average age
Jewish	0	16	4.44	60.8
Lutheran	13	72	3.33	63.1
Christian	0	20	3.25	62.7
Various Protestant	20	78	3.14	61.2
Baptist	1	25	2.92	69.0
Presbyterian	3	61	2.79	63.2
Methodist	8	114	2.64	62.7
Roman Catholic	27	122	2.61	54.7
Episcopalian	3	23	2.52	66.6
Unchurched	27	75	2.24	57.4
Congregational	2	26	1.92	65.0

Under "Various Protestant" are grouped a large number of minor denominations. The large number of single people here are found in such sects as the Salvation Army and certain Mission groups.

Noteworthy is the large size of the Jewish families which is probably accounted for by the fact that they are all Russian born.

In regard to the Catholic figures, note the high percentage of unmarried and also the extremely low longevity figure. These facts have been remarked in other studies. Only the "Unchurched" and the "Various Protestant" show a higher percentage of unmarried than the Catholics. In order to offset this high percentage of unmarried the average Catholic family would have to be larger than the average Protestant family; in fact it is smaller. If we estimated the family size on the basis of the married, excluding the childless, we would get a figure of 3.3 children per father or mother, exactly the same as in the study from 'Who's Who."

The following table shows the grouping of the various denominations of the native born:

	Single	Married	Average number children per married decedent	Average age of married decedent
Lutheran	11	30	3.30	53.4
Various Protestant	17	60	3.28	59.8
Christian	0	20	3.25	62.7
Presbyterian	2	48	2.60	62.4
Methodist	8	99	2.58	61.9
Baptist	1	18	2.56	67.0
Catholic	23	90	2.38	52.3
Episcopalian	3	20	2.30	67.1
Unchurched	25	66	2.17	56.6

The relative position of the Catholics in this study is much the same as in the study from "Who's Who."

While from the studies given one would be scarcely justified in drawing sweeping conclusions as to the size of the families of various denominations, yet they do emphasize the question that is frequently asked: "Are Catholic families larger?"

COMMUNICATIONS

HOW TO HANDLE CATHOLIC NEWS

Albany, N. Y.

TO the Editor: I like Clem Lane's straightforward answer to "Indictment," and for the most part agree with him on the handling of Catholic news, despite his inclination to take me to task for prodding him into writing about it. For I wrote not to string words but to create controversy and definite action. In the case of Mr. Lane it appears there has been action for a long time.

With his method of gathering Catholic news I have no quarrel. It is admirable and may well be followed to the letter by other Catholic newspapermen. The sole objection is that it places all initiative on the Catholic newspaperman and not on the editor where it belongs. It also places the staff member in the position of an intruder where intrusion may be unwelcome. Where such cooperation as he has given his paper is welcome, it is an excellent method, even though it does demand extra effort on the part of the zealous staff member.

As Mr. Lane points out, Catholic news belongs on the city assignment book with other important news. How to get it there is the problem and, while Mr. Lane has solved that problem for his own paper, I cannot believe the last word has been said. Indeed, I feel it would be leaving the whole subject in the air for THE COMMONWEAL to let it be the last word.

Mr. Lane has indicated that both clergy and editors must be "sold" on Catholic news. He is far more optimistic than I am when he states, "So to my mind we have a condition where the newspapers are willing to print Catholic news and the Church is pleased to see it printed." From my own study of the nation's press that is a condition yet to be realized.

Even the matter of circulation is debatable. Any society editor knows that it is not the amount of social news she prints but its quality that makes her page. Her page may not have one reader among the "upper crust" of society, yet if it contains their names and doings she can rest content that it will be read by the thousands who like to read about these social leaders. Church news, for the most part, is treated much as is society news, and churches get space on the basis of the social importance of those who attend them.

What Catholic newspapermen need to "sell" their papers is the fact that the Catholic Church belongs in the category of straight news. That while it has a social side its principal function is religion and after that everything else. In so far as I have been able to discover, New York is the one place where this fact is realized.

By and large, Catholic newspapermen are not alert in assisting their Church and their papers to reach an understanding on Catholic news. Indifferent, many of them, others unawakened, they make little impress on their own papers. They need to be the first to be stirred and after them the press. After that will be time enough to reach out to the clergy, though that, too, must come.

STUART D. GOULDING.

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CATHOLIC READING

St. James, L. I.

TO the Editor: Mr. Rumford asks in your issue of December 15 about the ten most important Catholic books. I suggest:

Christopher Dawson, "Progress and Religion";
Christopher Dawson, "The Spirit of the Oxford Movement";
M. C. D'Arcy, "The Nature of Belief";
Bede Jarrett, "The History of Europe";
Bede Jarrett, "Meditations for Layfolk";
Rudolf Allers, "The Psychology of Character";
George H. Joyce, "Christian Marriage";
Waldemar Gurian, "Bolshevism";
Nicolas Berdyaev, "Christianity and Class War";
Henri Ghéon, "The Secret of the Curé d'Ars";
Gertrud von le Fort, "The Veil of Veronica."

All of these books, with the exception of "Meditations for Layfolk," a peculiarly beautiful and stimulating book, happen to be published by Sheed and Ward.

If more novels are desired, let those of Robert Hugh Benson be read. Benson was a novelist of the Victorian and early Georgian eras, really, but his books are ever engrossing. I could suggest also a course in Huysmans, Bazin and Bordeaux; but except for Huysmans, one has to be able to read French. For the more philosophically minded there is Maritain, who is sometimes difficult reading, but all his better works can be had in English.

Another of your correspondents, "Instructor," asked for a list of noted converts. One of the English Catholic publishers, Burns, Oates and Washbourne, has, I see, just published "Conversions to the Catholic Church: A Symposium" of personal confessions by a number of notable converts including Wilfred Childe, Lord Alfred Douglas, Reverend Owen Francis Dudley, Penrose Fry, F. W. Harvey, Christopher Hollis, Sheila Kaye-Smith, Reverend E. Lester, S.J., Reverend C. C. Martindale, S.J., Reverend H. E. G. Rope, and Robert Speaight. We need of course a similar book for American converts.

JAMES W. LANE.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: In reply to Alan Rumford's recent request for suggestions for spending some of his winter evenings with authors who best reflect the attitude of the intelligent Catholic toward the modern world, I am happy to submit the following:

Karl Adam, "The Spirit of Catholicism";
M. C. D'Arcy, S.J., "The Nature of Belief";
Nicholas Berdyaev, "The End of Our Time";
Christopher Dawson, "Enquiries into Religion and Culture";
Christopher Dawson, "Progress and Religion";
Gerald Ellard, S. J., "Christian Life and Worship";
A. M. Goichon, "Ernest Psichari";
Dietrich von Hildebrand, "In Defense of Purity";
Jacques Maritain, "Three Reformers";
Francis Stuart, "Pigeon Irish."

Although the selection of any such list is bound to reveal the predilections of the compiler, the material available has much to do with the preponderance of suggested books being devoted to the field of ideas. On the whole, the work of Catholics in the literary arts is quite inferior to the wealth of their contributions to the world of thought just at this time when so many intelligent people are seeking reasonable and satisfying answers to our modern dilemmas.

E. S. S.

NECESSITY AND LITERATURE

Ruthven, Iowa.

TO the Editor: An editorial entitled "Necessity and Literature" in the December 1 issue of our esteemed COMMONWEAL enunciates a general principle which, coming at that particular time, suggests a specific application to which I wish to call attention. Something of a general principle may be drawn from these words of the editorial in question: "Whenever Catholic thought and experience are not deeply rooted in a given national life they run the risk of seeming pallid and inconsequential. . . . The contributions of Catholicism to each national tradition must be resolutely and critically fitted into the picture of the whole which passes muster in the schools and the press." While this COMMONWEAL editorial dealt with literature, the principle involved finds a specific and timely application in the Catholic observance of Thanksgiving Day. The writer would plead for a more general and more genuinely religious observance of this national holiday on the part of Catholics.

To say that there are some amongst us who would admit but scant enthusiasm for Thanksgiving Day, is to put it mildly. Granted that the early New England observance of the day may have been actuated by the desire to supplant the "popish" feast of Christmas, the custom is now all to the good and has become a part of our finer national traditions. Granted also that the Christian should rather return thanks every day to the Giver of all good gifts, there is something splendid and inspiring in the leader of a great nation officially calling on the people of that nation to return thanks to God as a nation. In Catholic alignment with this national custom we can see only the fulfilment of Saint Paul's admonition to "prove all things" and to "hold fast that which is good." Catholics should not be wanting in the fitting and proper observance of this day.

As Catholics, with whom patriotism is a virtue, and truly loving our country, we have an added reason even to take the lead in this matter. In the Mass we have the act of thanksgiving *par excellence*. We are truly a chosen generation, a kingly priesthood. May not Catholics then in a very real sense, as representatives of their country before God, serve as a kingly priesthood of this nation, in that through them and through the Sacrifice of the Mass a bounteous God may be most abundantly thanked for the blessings He has showered upon our country.

Catholicism is alien to no land and to no legitimate form of government. In these United States it has found for the most part conditions congenial to its free de-

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velopment. We are proud to be a constituent part of the American Commonwealth. We should strive to do our part in creating what will eventually be the distinctly American culture. It has been pointed out by a recent writer that it was a thorough appreciation of this thought that gave to John England, John Ireland and Cardinal Gibbons an influence with the American people that has not been equalled since.

The annual celebration of the Pan-American Mass in Washington on Thanksgiving Day has come to be a notable feature of life in the national capital. Catholic pastors throughout the country might well encourage a sympathetic attitude toward the proper religious observance of the day by arranging for the Mass or Masses of the day at a time most suitable for the largest number and urging their people to attend.

E. L. McEvoy.

SOUND MONEY AND THE "JUST PRICE"

Providence, R. I.

TO the Editor: The writer has had the misfortune of conclusively solving economic problems a decade or more before they reached the consciousness of the public. The first article published favoring cancellation of Europe's war debt appeared in *America* for December 15, 1917. In *America* for February 15, 1919, appeared the first article in this country presenting the sound economic basis for the Pope's recommendation of "general condonation" in the matter of paying for damages and the cost of the war. More than twenty years ago the writer anticipated, in writing, the recent book, "Profits or Prosperity," by Professor Henry Pratt Fairchild, of New York University, in which he proves that general profits are "mathematically impossible," which conclusion the writer arrived at nearly forty years ago. In *America* for June 22, 1920, was published a critical analysis of Irving Fisher's "Stabilized Dollar," in which criticism the present economic situation was prophesied. Professor Fisher was then advocating the "compensated dollar" for the benefit of the creditors, as he now purports to favor it for the benefit of the debtors.

This lengthy preamble may permit a much too condensed argument against the editorial, "Sound Men and Sound Money," in THE COMMONWEAL for December 15.

It was the waste entailed in financing Europe and the subsequent cost of the war that brought high prices. No matter what kind of money and no matter what the metal content of the money, prices would have doubled during the war period; that is, the dollar would have its purchasing power cut in half. With everybody working, and many working night and day, the general public was able to subsist. Evidently the low purchasing power of the dollar did not enable people to pay their debts. In fact, the cost of living was so high that only the extraordinarily well paid were able to avoid increased debt, unless wife and children went to work. The government took so great an amount of the current product that the low-priced dollar could not be saved for the payment of debts.

Now that the war is over, as is also the splurge of sending our goods all over the world, we must get back toward the value or purchasing power of money before the war. There is no way of preventing this trend, no matter what kind of money is used and no matter what the metal content of the money—unless we acquire another government debt of $30,000,000,000, at which point, or perhaps earlier, the present economic system will be ready for its coffin. The capitalistic Slave State is now being prepared for us by the recognition of Russia. Litvinov was well received by Wall Street. Wilson kept us out of war, and in the same sense Roosevelt will make secure our economic freedom.

It is only waste that can cause high prices. The debtor would be better off if waste were avoided, even though the saving be of particular benefit to the creditor. The debtor would gain nothing by paying the creditor less, if in order to pay the creditor less he must permit the government to waste more. The creditor would invest the payment in new capital investment, which would force a reduction in the rate of interest, and we cannot have any semblance of prosperity until we have new capital in the form of machinery and industrial plants, the construction of which affords the only opportunity for mechanics to secure their regular employment.

It is commonly believed that a great quantity of money can be passed out and high prices brought about without injury to anybody. But even a tremendous amount of counterfeit money would not increase prices, unless it was used wastefully. If counterfeit money were used for productive purposes, there would be further deflation rather than inflation or an increase in the price level.

As further evidence of being ahead of the times, let me quote from an article in *America* for December 7, 1918, when people unquestioningly accepted the current rate of interest:

"Foreign trade is entirely responsible for the unrest among the workers. Interest on mere capital is the product of foreign trade. . . . If capital had no interest-earning power it would not mean poverty, but prosperity. It would only lose its earning power by reason of its abundance, because of the ease with which capital could be accumulated."

In the remarkable article by Paul Ernest Anderson, published in THE COMMONWEAL for November 17, we find an exposition of "the extraordinarily high level of education and general prosperity" between 1150 and 1350. Mr. Anderson writes, "Anyone who hoarded coin or money lost it entirely at the end of the year. Every possessor of money was thus forced to put out his money at a contantly lowering rate of interest because money was suddenly plentiful and easy to get; competition for money reduced interest rates. Money being abundant, interest finally disappeared!"

The disappearance of interest was the desideratum, that can be secured in this day not by increasing the quantity of money but the quantity of capital.

Mr. Anderson's article, "Centuries of the 'Just Price,' " deserves much more attention than has been given to it.

M. P. CONNERY.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

Ten Minute Alibi

I HAVE always enjoyed a mystery play that turned out not to be a mystery play at all. "Ten Minute Alibi" is not a great or imposing addition to the stage literature of crime but it does serve to illustrate one of the many varieties of approach which can create keen suspense in an audience without the use of the conventional tricks to throw the audience off the track.

The initial outlines of the play follow a familiar pattern. An international crook is about to persuade a young English girl to go to the Continent with him without benefit of clergy. A young and impoverished lawyer who has been a life-long friend of the girl in question tries to intervene. He is drugged by the use of a cigarette and during his unnatural sleep dreams the details of a method by which he can kill the villain in the piece and yet provide an air-tight alibi. This dream version of the crime forms a second scene to the first act.

The novelty comes with the second act in which the actual crime is carried out. The suspense created is quite astonishing. The details of the crime do not, of course, work out exactly as planned and there are a dozen moments, when the audience, whose sympathy is quite shamelessly with the murderer, wonders whether or not the whole plan is going to fail through some unexpected or trivial turn of events. The crime was to have been committed when the victim was entirely alone; in actual fact, it has to be committed when at least two other people are in the apartment. Some of the simplest details of the plan as contrived turn into the most complex situations. The young lawyer who is anything but a murderer by instinct finds himself gripped by nerves and apprehension at every instant. When the crime is finally committed, the audience gives the murderer hearty applause.

It goes without saying that the ethical implications of the play are all haywire. There is no real necessity for murdering the villain in order to put him conveniently out of the way. But I am merely discussing the technique of a new type of mystery play, and not the very dubious ethics which led the audience to approve most heartily of premeditated murder. The rest of the play is given over to the attempt of the Scotland Yard detectives to break down the apparently perfect alibi established. The detectives are perfectly clear in their mind as to who the probable murderer is. Nor are these hounds of the law particularly stupid after the usual fashion of play detectives. They really go about their job in expert fashion and there are many times in the last half of the play when the net seems to close in, only to be broken by the extraordinary composure and quick wit of the young lawyer.

It is not my part, I am sure, to betray the confidence of the authors of this play by giving the final outcome. It is quite sufficient to say that there is hardly an instant up to the final curtain when new elements of suspense are not introduced to keep the audience on edge. I do think that the play would have been vastly improved by creating a more water-tight necessity for the murder—something morally the equivalent of self-defense, for example. As it is, the play does little more than create a natural emotional sympathy with the criminal through the trick of painting the villain in deepest black. It establishes a motive for the crime but not a justification for it.

The production, in general, is marked by very competent acting especially on the part of Bramwell Fletcher, as the young lawyer, and Joseph Spurin-Calleia as a most interesting butler. Mr. Spurin-Calleia will probably be remembered as the waiter in "Broadway" who did so much for the edification of the audience by merely jingling change in his picket. (At the Bijou Theatre.)

The Invisible Man

IT WOULD be easy enough to raise minor objections to the technique of this film which attempts to portray H. G. Wells's legend of a man who learns how to make himself invisible. But my rather keen delight in the picture, which I readily admit, is based on something broader than the mediocre results achieved in this particular screen production. It rests on my very strong feeling that when the screen attempts to do what the stage cannot possibly do, we find the real justification for motion pictures as a separate and distinct art.

The screen is particularly well adapted to what we might call "impossible romance," that is, the achievement of visual effects concerning purely imaginary situations which no technique of the stage has yet accomplished. Mr. Wells's story serves as a particularly good example. In it a scientist discovers a drug which taken in small continuous doses, first destroys all pigment and color in the human body and finally renders the body itself invisible to the naked eye. The scientist experiments upon himself with this drug with two most unfortunate consequences. In the first place, he does not discover the necessary antidote by which he can bring himself back to visibility, and, in the second place, he does not realize that the drug changes the entire mentality of person. He becomes insane with lust for power and believes his invisibility will in time render him the master of all men. He is willing to resort to any means to achieve his end. There is one significant point which I hope will not be overlooked, and that is that the invisible man admits just before his death that he has tampered with things a man should never touch. This brings into play the same profound philosophy which the Welsh novelist, Arthur Machen, has made the basis of his semi-mystical stories. Part of the nature of evil, in other words, is its desire to penetrate beyond the limits which God and nature have imposed upon man.

As in the famous film of Paul Whiteman's "The King of Jazz," my chief enthusiasm for "The Invisible Man" is because it illustrates so well an almost unexplored field in motion pictures. We have the entire realm of folklore, fairy stories and magic legends which can only be visualized by the expert tricks of photography. The screen is certainly at its best when it is doing what the stage cannot do and this gives us hope that as the years go by, the screen will develop its unique possibilities.

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BOOKS

Underlying World Disorder

The Menace of Fascism, by John Strachey. New York: Covici Friede. $2.25.

MR. STRACHEY, former Labour Member of Parliament and now a convert to Communism, sets forth in this very capably written book an account of the fate which he is very sure will befall us if we do not speedily reconstruct society upon the principals of Moscow. In 1930 Mr. Strachey was Parliamentary Secretary to Sir Oswald Mosley, who today aspires to be the Hitler of Great Britain. As lieutenant to Mr. J. H. Thomas in the task of combating unemployment, Sir Oswald collided with the civil servants—"the permanent trustees of British capitalism"—and with his own party leaders, the result being his charting of that independent course which has led to the organization of the British Fascists. Young Mr. Strachey was unable to follow his chief upon the new path; rather he took the other road—the only possible one (he is very confident)—that leads to Moscow. The major point of his book is that unless the labor movement throughout the world breaks loose from its conservative leadership and uses the political weapons which are still in its possession to establish the Communist order, it will go back, surrendering all it has won, and even lose the democratic political machinery that yet remains in its hands.

To support this argument Mr. Strachey recounts the fate of German Social Democracy, which, allowing its hour of opportunity to pass, betrayed the cause of social revolution and fought a rear-guard action in defense of capitalism and political democracy, until at last it perished of dry rot and was blown to the winds by Hitler. The same fate, we are here told, hangs over the British Labour party and all Social-Democratic parties that refuse to move forward upon a truly revolutionary program. Ever since the war, and especially since 1929, these parties have been moving in "reverse gear," seeking to prop up a breaking capitalist society and thus necessarily exacting from their suffering members one sacrifice after another. Things have come to such a pass that party leaders who once aimed at social revolution are now concerned chiefly with defending the existing political order against Fascism. Now capitalism, if we are to believe Mr. Strachey, in the very near future must reach the end of its tether, but before it does so the capitalists will play their last cards; that is, they will transfer their defense from the hands of democratic politicians to men of violence, who will destroy the whole democratic system and drive the masses back "to the unquestioning acceptance of lives of unrelieved drudgery—to that slumber out of which the thunder of the great machines awoke the peoples of the world."

This account of the bankrupt "gradual" tactics of Socialist parties is by far the most convincing part of Mr. Strachey's book. Socialism has certainly suffered from the timidity and conservatism of its leaders, has indeed borne too much the character of a religion of faith

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Next Week

BARNYARDIA, by Charles Morrow Wilson captures the charm that goes with a rural, semi-rural or even suburban life, the authentic small joys of being down on the farm. Since the turn of the century, and even before that, these United States have been literarily and journalistically flooded with details about city life and apartment-house sophistication. Unquestionably there has been evoked throughout the land among the younger generations a dissatisfaction with remaining where they are, of brightening up the corner where they are, of contributing to the civilization and richness of life where the family home is. Instead there has been a great deal of escapist, rootless living and a loss of appreciation of values. This has contributed, no doubt, to the prevalence of bitter, defeatist and cynical literature in our times. Mr. Morrow is too practical a farmer to suggest an Arcadia; he does however picture a rural America and natural affections and simple pleasures that are not intimated by the cry of "boobery" of the sardonic urban editors and writers. . . . SEEING OR BELIEVING, by W. Michael Ducey, recounts the personal impressions of this distinguished liturgist upon seeing Theresa Neumann of Konnersreuth and the apparent miracles of her weekly Passion of the Cross. Father Ducey, who writes from Maria Laach, not only recounts a startlingly vivid experience but also relates it to its larger implication. . . . AND NOW WHAT?, by Helen Hughes Hielscher, is a discussion of ways and means to carry on the struggle for temperance in the use of alcoholic beverages. As temperance was not achieved *ipso facto* by prohibition, certainly it will not be, by repeal, or by liquor boards, or more wise police regulations, helpful as these things may be. . . . STATIONS IN JUDEA, by Cuthbert Wright, reveals scenes of the Holy Land with mosaic-like brightness.

without works. It has hesitated to execute its own professed program of social reconstruction, which is, of course, the reason why so many Socialists have passed over into Communist ranks, where revolutionary will is more active and determined.

But when Mr. Strachey deals with the nature of this "menace of Fascism" which stands across our path he is not nearly so convincing. In fact, one is tempted to doubt whether he really knows what Fascism is, or has even read very widely in Fascist literature; certainly his book contains no evidence that he has done so. For him it is all very simple: the great capitalistic masters, when their ownership of the means of production is threatened to the danger point, discard the democratic politicians and hire violent men to crush the working classes. Such is his neat interpretation of Mussolini and Hitler, whom Mr. Strachey regards as no more than the pliant instruments of a ruthless band of capitalists. Everybody has heard the same thing said by men less intelligent than Mr. Strachey, and it has just the necessary modicum of plausibility to wash it down in minds that cannot see two inches beneath the surface of things. The revolt of organic society against the atomized and mechanical order which utilitarian liberalism creates means nothing at all to Mr. Strachey. The ideal of rescuing a whole society from disintegration and death of the spirit is equally meaningless, and so is the great aim of liberating the state from a destructive and degrading class struggle. When Fascists talk about social justice that is insincere; they really want brutal reaction, imperialism and war.

Mr. Strachey tells us that Fascism is the "remorseless enemy" of the whole movement of hope, progress and aspiration; but above all, he insists, "Fascism proclaims the necessity and excellence of war." In proof he offers passages from some of the more inflammatory speeches and writings of Mussolini, Hitler, Goering and a few others. But Mr. Strachey does not seem to know that this kind of talk is rather a passionate glorification of the heroic life than any desire for blood-letting.

And of course he is very far from realizing that Fascist enthusiasm for war is but the choking and pathetic cry of human nature for the truly heroic life, the deprivation of which in modern times is starving the soul of man. For man craves to give himself for some end, and if he be denied the worship of the true God he will immolate himself before the false one. I do not mean to interject here a defense of Fascism against Mr. Strachey, but I do mean that there are elements in it which his mind, as revealed in this book, will never grasp. For he can write a chapter called "The Century of Hope," without even suspecting the real reasons for the passing of that humanistic optimism which flowed in slowing current through the nineteenth century. He thinks the defeat of capitalism and the victory of Communism "can alone solve the problems of the human race in the twentieth century," but he does not even know what those problems really are. His book should alarm us less over Fascism than over the fact that so gifted a man as he can be so blind to the spiritual distress that underlies world disorder.

Ross J. S. Hoffman.

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Passing the Torch

The Great Tradition, by Granville Hicks. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.50.

SINCE the Civil War the literature of these United States has known alarming vicissitudes, ethically speaking at least. There has been an oftentimes disheartening lack of unity, an inconstancy of values probably without parallel in the literary history of any other country. Yet only the most short-sighted observer would consider the situation altogether dismaying. If the pattern itself of our fiction and poetry and criticism has sometimes seemed incoherent, no one can deny that there has been present always an underlying main current, a definite flux—toward what goal we are not certain, but in a direction at least possible to define. This has been Mr. Hicks's purpose in "The Great Tradition": to crystallize the direction of our literary aspirations by aligning it to the psychological development of the American spirit.

The great tradition was the frontier with its constantly shifting termini of vast horizons, its movement, the race it bred to a sense, or a hope, of the largeness of life. The frontier has disappeared now, its end precipitated by the machine shortening time and narrowing distances; but the spirit of the frontier, the restless search for a new life, the impatience with the pettiness and misery of the old, seems somehow to endure. Likewise the reflection of that spirit, the revolt against artificial barriers and restrictions goes on with fairly steady continuity. So despite the mechanized chaos which has overtaken us, ours remains an idealistic literature.

Almost with the appearance of the machine there arose those aware of its dangers, and its progress has had the constant accompaniment of revolt. "The Great Tradition" is a closely analytical study of this rebellion against the life we have had imposed upon us with its menace to what we consider the true virtues of our civilization. Beginning with Whitman and Lowell, the one singing his vast song of freedom, the other voicing fears for the safety of that freedom, and continuing through the successive generations of regionalists, muckrakers, and bitter pessimists of the immediate post-war years down to the experimentalists of our own time we find, if not a direct quest for the ideal, at least a healthy dissatisfaction with things as they are.

The picture presented is a comprehensive one, detailed and finely unified, and the conclusions offered are the result of careful research and slow deliberation. It is only regrettable that the attitude of complete detachment is not always present, especially when the author deals with such men as Robert Herrick and Henry James. It is all very well, for instance, to assign to Herrick the credit for rescuing "the ethical standards of the reformers from the confusions and contradictions of middle-class progressivism" and to say that Henry James fled from America rather than face the music. But it might be contended, with equal assurance of listeners, that the "ethical standards" had already undergone vast mutations by Herrick's time, and that in the case of Henry James it was less a question of fleeing rather than face the music, than fleeing because

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there was no music. If we bar these discrepancies, however (and there will be many to share the author's view), Mr. Hicks's work may well be regarded as a notable record of the inspiration which gives our literature its most distinguishing feature of individuality.

FRANK WOLLENCOTT BARNES.

A Truly Historical Novel

The Journey of the Flame, by Antonio de Fierro Blanco. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $3.00.

WHEN Juan Colorado, nicknamed "The Flame" for his red hair and pugnacious temperament, set out on his long journey, he sat astride a mule. Mules he respected for they are "almost indestructible, being compounded of all that is tough in a donkey and all that is enduring in a horse"; and he would not laugh at them lest he hurt their feelings. But he was not averse to eating their flesh, if necessary—"mule meat and horse meat are not bad and the donkey excellent were it not that Christ's cross upon its shoulders forbids it as a food to all Christians except in extremity." But the best nourishment for this tough cowboy was bull's beef. "Had I a boy to bring up as a boy should be brought up, I would kill a seven-year bull weekly and if the child from six months old ate aught else but bull's flesh, I should dress him in skirts. Bull's beef is man's food."

All this sounds as though Juan was a bad *hombre* a hundred years before Pancho Villa. Indeed he was the famous killer's prototype—but mellowed by the Catholic religion which had at that time been unharmed by revolution and the Reform laws. For it was 1810 and Juan was one of the escort of the Spanish king's inspector-general sent to investigate the condition of the missions scattered along the coast from La Paz in Lower California to San Francisco Bay. The young "Flame" guarded the inspector-general, learned to kill men and beasts, gazed enraptured at the Vermilion Sea (Gulf of Lower California), studied the customs of the pearl-divers, explored the inlets where sunken galleons were said to contain great treasure, and traversed the wild sierras, where pumas and bears lurked, and the deserts over which the untiring Junípero Serra had walked. His stern nature was drawn in admiration to the Jesuits, somewhat uncharitably at the expense of the Dominicans and Franciscans who followed them in this country. But in his old age, Juan sighed in an elegiac vein about the decay of the missions: "And so a system perished which was perhaps best for the Indians and for Mexico."

This book is the semi-historical record of the journey, told to Señor Fierro Blanco on Juan's hundredth birthday. The author describes the book as a historical novel in which certain deviations from the truth are essential. But it is so colorful, so packed with racy anecdotes, descriptions of the country, folk-lore, bits of *vaquero* philosophy that one must accept it as more than a synthetic piece of work. It is an indigenous document of a wild and strange land, of Catholic civilization and aboriginal wilderness.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN.

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Uncertain Economics

Social Credit, by C. H. Douglas. New York: W. W. Norton and Company. $2.00.

SHORTLY after the close of the Great War the galley proof of the first book in which Major Douglas set forth his theory of social credit was sent for examination to my journalist friend, William Hard. He turned it over to me, requesting my opinion on the merits of the new theory. After spending a reasonable amount of time on the material, I replied that I could not understand either the Douglas criticisms or proposals.

In the intervening years I have more than once tried to ascertain what Major Douglas was driving at but never with satisfactory results to myself. I discussed the social credit theory with several of its defenders, particularly an Irish priest, an Irish layman and Thomas Johnson, for many years the leader of the Irish Labor party and now a member of the Senaad Eireann. To my question, "Do you understand the theory?" the latter replied, "Sometimes I think I do and sometimes I am afraid that I don't."

Having carefully read the author's latest statement of his social credit theory, I have made progress to about the same position as that held by Mr. Johnson in 1922. That is, I think I have a vague understanding of it, but I am by no means certain. Concerning a few propositions in the book I have positive opinions. Major Douglas has not proved his assertion that the one cause of industrial maladjustments in modern societies is money (page 25). Part I of the volume, the part entitled "Philosophy," is unconvincing and indeed irrelevant to his thesis. If I understand his argument, he does not fully justify his conclusion: "That the collective prices of the goods available for sale at any moment in a given community, if they have been produced by ordinary commercial methods, cannot be met by the money available through the channels of wages, salaries and dividends at one and the same moment." The remedy which he offers for this alleged condition is extremely complicated and unconvincing.

In a painstaking but not too lengthy analysis of the social credit theory, Professor H. T. N. Gaitskill declares that the argument concerning the deficiency of purchasing power seems to present "the core of truth which lies within the highly confused and much misunderstood Douglas analysis"; but the professor is not certain that this is "the essential part of the Douglas theory." The methods by which Major Douglas would meet the "deficiency" seem to Professor Gaitskill to be "both peculiar and complicated." As a consequence, the purpose of the cure remains "rather vague" and it is uncertain "which interpretation of the analysis is the correct one. The critic must to the end remain in difficulties, fighting not only dogma but obscurity" ("What Everybody Wants to Know about Money," pages 295-303). Whether Professor Gaitskill is correct in these unfavorable judgments I do not know, but the confession of uncertainty about Major Douglas's meaning gives me consolation.

JOHN A. RYAN.

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Briefer Mention

The New Jersey Sisters of Charity, by Sister Mary Agnes Sharkey. New York: Longmans, Green and Company. 3 Volumes. $12.00.

THE SEVENTY-FIVE years of heroic good works undertaken first by Mother Mary Xavier Mehegan and carried on by the Congregation of Sisters of Charity for the Diocese of Newark, is in these volumes carefully and beautifully recorded. This is a monumental work to mark how many devoted days given by the Sisters for the love of God to the serving of the least of His children, orphans and the sick and helpless, and to the advancement of learning. The Sisters founded the first Catholic college to award degrees to women in the United States, and of recent years, to their local works have added missions to China and the West Indies. The specific incidents of these achievements in charity, the stalwart championing by the hierarchy and the clergy of these labors, make a moving spiritual history. Not only the libraries of Catholic institutions of the dioceses may well have a set of these three volumes, but also Catholic homes where in quiet hours readers wish to refresh their spirits and renew their appreciation of the constant effort put forth to make the surroundings of their homes places of peace, in which to be glad and proud to live.

Virtue and Christian Refinement, by Blessed Don Bosco. St. Louis: B. Herder Book Company. $1.25.

THIS is a truly delightful book by a saint about a saint, by one of the world's great pedagogues and prison reformers who instituted practically the so-called modern method of preventive discipline and emphasis on desirable positives rather than on don'ts, about his model, Saint Vincent de Paul. The translation from the Italian has been made by a Sister of Charity and there are introductions by Cardinal Bourne and Monsignor Souvay, C. M., Superior General of the Priests of the Mission and of the Sisters of Charity. The book, naive with great truths, with its beautiful exposition of Christian refinement and enduring Christian happiness in charity, is a fine reminder of goods of world-wide importance which have been markedly reemphasized in the Holy Year.

CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN MOODY is president of Moody's Investors Service and the author of "The Truth about the Trusts," "Profitable Investing" and other books.

DOROTHY C. MCGRATH is a Rochester poet.

REV. JOHN T. GILLARD, S.S.J., is the author of "The Catholic Church and the American Negro," editor of the *Colored Harvest* and vice-chairman of the Maryland Anti-lynching Federation.

ELIZABETH COATSWORTH is the author of "Fox Footprints" and "Atlas and Beyond."

HAROLD FIELDS is executive director of the National League for American Citizenship.

CHARLES MORROW WILSON contributes articles to current periodicals.

ROBERT J. O'CONNOR is an attorney-at-law of Sioux City, Iowa.

ROSS J. S. HOFFMAN is professor of history at New York University.

FRANK WOLLENCOTT BARNES is a lecturer at the Sorbonne.

FRANK C. HANIGHEN contributes articles to current periodicals and makes translations from the French.

RT. REV. MGR. JOHN A. RYAN is professor of moral theology and industrial ethics in the Catholic University of America, and director of the Social Action Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. He is the author of "A Living Wage" and "Social Reconstruction."

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